

SELF-HANDICAPPING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: THE ROLE  
OF GENDER, SELF-ESTEEM, PROCRASTINATION, TEST ANXIETY,  
AND SELF-COMPASSION

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık  
Director

I certify that thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Prof. Dr. Ayhan Demir  
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this dissertation and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Prof. Dr. Ayhan DEMİR  
Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members**

Prof. Dr. Esin Tezer (METU, EDS) \_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Ayhan Demir (METU, EDS) \_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Oya Yerin Güneri (METU, EDS) \_\_\_\_\_

Assist. Prof. Dr. Müge Çelik Örücü (TEDU, EDS) \_\_\_\_\_

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mana Ece Tuna (TEDU, EDS) \_\_\_\_\_

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Name, Surname: Funda Barutçu Yıldırım

Signature :

## **ABSTRACT**

### **SELF-HANDICAPPING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF GENDER, PROCRASTINATION, TEST ANXIETY, AND SELF- COMPASSION**

Barutçu Yıldırım, Funda

Ph.D., Department of Educational Sciences

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ayhan Demir

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The purpose of the present study was to examine the predictor role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion for the variation in university students' self-handicapping.

The sample of the study consisted of 801 undergraduate students (404 females and 397 males). In order to collect data, Self-Handicapping Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Tuckman Procrastination Scale, Anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire, Self-Compassion Scale, and demographic information form were used.

In order to determine the role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion in predicting university students' self-handicapping, hierarchical regression analysis was conducted by adding one predictor at each step. Results showed that all of the predictor

variables contributed to self-handicapping significantly. The last model explained 61% of the variance in self-handicapping scores. Semi-partial variance of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion were 1%, 30%, 22%, 6%, and 2%, respectively.

Keywords: Self-Handicapping, Self-Esteem, Procrastination, Test Anxiety, Self-Compassion

## ÖZ

### ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNDE KENDİNİ SABOTAJ: CİNSİYET, ÖZ-SAYGI, ERTELEME, SINAV KAYGISI VE ÖZ-ANLAYIŞIN ROLÜ

Barutçu Yıldırım, Funda

Doktora, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın, üniversite öğrencilerinin kendini sabotajındaki yordayıcı rollerini araştırmaktır.

Çalışmanın örneklemini 801 (404 kadın ve 397 erkek) lisans öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak, Kendini Sabotaj Ölçeği, Rosenberg Öz-Saygı Ölçeği, Tuckman Erteleme Ölçeği, Akademik Duygular Ölçeğinin Kaygı alt boyutu, Öz-Anlayış Ölçeği ve demografik veri formu kullanılmıştır.

Cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın, öğrencilerin kendini sabotaj düzeylerini yordama güçlerini belirlemek için her adımda sırasıyla modele bir yordayıcı eklenerek, hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Bulgular, bütün yordayıcı değişkenlerin anlamlı olduğunu göstermiştir. Son model varyansın % 61'ini açıklamıştır.

Cinsiyet, öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı ve öz-anlayış için kısmi varyanslar sırasıyla %1, %30, %22, %6 ve %2 olarak bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kendini Sabotaj, Öz-Saygı, Erteleme, Sınav Kaygısı, Öz-Anlayış

To My Mother, Zeynep Barutçu



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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background to the Study**

At first glance, “self” is a simple, ordinary and common word. However, it is a complex, multidimensional, and unique construct. If you look at the “self” as a word, you can only see white color, but if you want to discover the technicolored nature of the self, you can pass the white light through the prism and see the colors of a rainbow with the dispersion.

William James contrived to use a prism while looking at the self. He is a leading philosopher and psychologist, who developed the theory of the self. According to James (1890), the self is comprised of two main parts, namely “me” and “I”. Whereas “I” refers to “the self as knower”, “Me” refers to “the self as known”. He further explained “me” under three classes: The material self, the social self, and the spiritual self. Whereas the material self encompasses the materials that we have such as our body, clothes, family, and property, the social self includes how we present the self to others. In different social settings, presentations of the self differ, so a person has many social selves. The spiritual self, on the other hand, can be regarded as the nucleus of the self and it includes the most inner and subjective part of the self, which embraces psychic features, core values, and conscience.

“I”, the self as knower, continually searches for new information and tries to expand “me”, the self as known. People search for self-knowledge by using physical, social, and inner psychological sources (Brown, 1998). As



the product of the search for self-knowledge, new information needs to be processed, evaluated and organized (Showers, 1992). People may use different pathways with different motives (accuracy, enhancement, and consistency) while seeking and evaluating self-relevant information (Brown, 1998).

Sedikides (1993) summarized self-evaluation process under three categories: Self-assessment, self-enhancement, and self-verification. The first category, self-assessment, includes seeking and gathering accurate self-relevant information. Reducing uncertainty and gathering objective knowledge about the self complete the missing part and clarify the whole picture of the self. People who use self-assessment rely on high diagnostic test or task, which clearly identify the level of the given traits such as ability, intelligence, and competence. The second category, self-enhancement, includes identifying self-relevant information, which put positive and powerful sides forward. People who use self-enhancement do not process all self-relevant knowledge with an accuracy criterion; they rather use a filter, which allows passing positive self-relevant knowledge. They try to enhance their positive self-schema and avoid negative one. Although they avoid negative information, which have unfavorable effects on self-concept, they can endure ambiguity to a specific extent, if they believe that they reach positive implications. The third category, self-verification, includes seeking evidence for affirming preexisting self-relevant knowledge. If the acquired self-knowledge is positive, they seek positive feedback; if it is negative, they pay attention to negative feedback. People who use self-verification seek the information that they are certain about themselves, as opposed to the people who use self-assessment and seek uncertain self-relevant information. In addition, people who use self-verification, seek both positive and negative self-information that is consistent with the preexisting knowledge rather than selecting positive ones as people who

use self-enhancement do. In short, consistency is more important than the accuracy and positivity of self-relevant information in this category.

Social comparison theory proposed that people have the tendency to gain accurate self-evaluation (Festinger, 1954), and some researchers emphasized the need for specific, accurate feedback about their performances and competences (e.g. Thorndike, 1912; Westberg & Jason, 2012). However this need is not valid for all people (Brown, 1998). McClelland (1961) stated that everyone does not seek “concrete knowledge of results of their choices of actions” (p. 231). Maslow (1968) asserted that fear of self-knowledge (i.e. emotions, capacities, potentialities) caused much of the psychological disturbances and this fear makes human more defensive. For example, people, who have low achievement motivation, avoid feedback that gives information about their relative abilities (Weiner et al., 1971). There are individual differences in seeking information about one’s own competence (Berglas & Jones, 1978). With a series of five experiments, Sedikides (1993) revealed that among the three self-evaluation motives, self-enhancement is the most powerful one followed by self-verification, and self-assessment.

People tend to see themselves as better than the actual self, and also better than the other people. For instance, a group of college students were asked to rate themselves and other university students with respect to a list of positive and negative attributes, and the results revealed that the majority of the students rated themselves more positively than the others (Brown, 1998). This study provides evidence for the use of self-serving biases, which is defined by Blaine and Crocker (1993) as interpreting self-relevant knowledge in a way that is favorable to the self without searching for its accuracy. Most people use self-serving biases because they want to feel good about themselves, and it embodies

seeking favorable feedback, avoiding negative feedback and altering implications of negative feedback in favor of the self, when negative feedback is inevitable (Blaine & Crocker, 1993).

Self-handicapping is one of the best examples of self-serving biases (e.g., Smith, Snyder, & Perkins, 1983; Snyder, Smith, Augelli, & Ingram, 1985). Self-handicapping is defined as creating or claiming obstacles to their successful performance in order to protect the sense of self-competence (Jones & Berglas, 1978). Jones and Berglas (1978) accommodate the Kelley's discounting and augmentation principles to self-handicapping. They explained that according to the augmentation principle competence should gain credit; impediment is the inhibitory cause of the success, whereas ability is the facilitative cause. When the cause of the success is inferred as ability, despite the presence of an impediment, ability is augmented. After claiming or creating the impediment, if the performance results in failure, it is externalized by attributing the reason to the impediment rather than the inability or incompetence. If the performance results in success despite the presence of the impediment, ability or competence gains extra credit and success is internalized. In addition, negative inference is not made for self-competence; on the contrary it is protected (Jones & Berglas, 1978).

Self-handicapping literature points out several factors that contribute to the occurrence, forms and degrees of self-handicapping (Brown & Kimble, 2009). Similar to other self-protection strategies, there are individual differences in using self-handicapping (Rhodewalt & Hill, 1995), but specific antecedents such as anticipated threat to self-concept, uncertainty about one's ability, self-presentational concerns (Rhodewalt, Morf, Hazlett, & Fairfield, 1991), private/public expectation of success, self-focus/other-focus view (Hirt, McCrea, & Kimble, 2000; Kimble & Hirt, 2005), types of feedback (Brown & Kimble, 2009),

importance of the task, and pre-existence of an environmental handicap (Shepperd & Arkin, 1989a) may affect the possibility of using self-handicapping strategies.

Self-handicapping strategies classified into two based on whether the impediment is created or claimed (Arkin & Baumgardner, 1985; Leary & Shepperd, 1986). Active creation of impediment to a successful performance refers to behavioral self-handicapping, whereas claiming the existence of impediment refers to self-reported handicapping (Brown, Park, & Folgar, 2012). Expending less effort to practice before a test (Brown & Kimble, 2009) or, coming home very late on the eve of an important exam (Warner & Moore, 2004) exemplifies behavioral self-handicapping. Also bad mood (Baumgardner, Lake, & Arkin, 1985) and test anxiety (Smith, Snyder, & Handelsman, 1982) are examples of self-reported handicapping. Due to the fact that behavioral self-handicapping includes active creation of impediment, it is more likely to decrease the possibility of success; and thus, it is more costly but more convincing. On the other hand self-reported self-handicapping is less costly and less convincing because it is based on a claim about the existence of an impediment (Leary & Shepperd, 1986).

The majority of the empirical studies that examine gender difference in regard to behavioral self-handicapping show a male dominance (McCrea, Hirt, & Milner, 2008). Some of these studies revealed that only males engage in behavioral self-handicapping, while females do not (e.g., Hirt, et al., 2000; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986), and some of them found out that males engage in behavioral self-handicapping more than women (e.g. Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b). The gender difference in self-reported handicapping is more puzzling and contradictory than behavioral self-handicapping. For example, some studies did not find significant gender difference (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997) while some of them showed that

males use more self-reported handicapping (Snyder et al., 1985). Similar to the self-reported handicapping, there is no consensus on the gender difference in regard to trait self-handicapping. Studies found insignificant gender difference (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005) or significant gender difference that shows that female have higher inclination to self-handicapping (Elliot & Church, 2003; Warner & Moore, 2004).

Besides the gender, self-esteem is the most significant contributor to the explanation of self-handicapping (Harris & Snyder, 1986). Anticipated threat to self-esteem may ignite the wick of self-handicapping (Snyder & Smith, 1982; Tice, 1991). Studies produced different results about how the level of self-handicapping is associated with the level of self-esteem. For example, a group of researchers found that people with high self-esteem self-handicapped more (e.g., Tice & Baumeister, 1990), while others revealed that people with low self-esteem are more prone to self-handicapping (Prapavessis & Grove, 1998). These inconsistent findings pointed out that people with both high and low self-esteem use self-handicapping strategies with different purposes (Martin & Brawley, 2002). The motive of people with low self-esteem is protecting their self-esteem and preventing to diminish its worth rather than boosting their success as people with high self-esteem do (Tice, 1991).

Based on the creativeness of people, a variety of behaviors or claims may serve as self-handicapping strategy. Procrastination, which is a common problem among university students (Kim & Seo, 2015; Uzun-Özer, Demir, & Ferrari, 2009), is a type of behavior used as a self-handicapping strategy (Beck, Koons, & Milgrim, 2000; Ferrari & Tice, 2000). Although there are many other motives behind procrastination, protecting self-esteem is one of the most well known one (Lay, Knish, & Zanatta, 1992). Procrastinators have the tendency to put off or avoid starting and completing a task (Tuckman, 1991). In this way, they detract

negative evaluation from their inability to inadequate time (Ferrari, 1991). In other words, from the self-handicapping perspective, procrastinators create a time lag by delaying starting and/or completing a task and they use this as an impediment, which obscure their inability, incompetency, or unintelligence. Studies underline the positive association between self-handicapping and procrastination; such that, self-handicappers procrastinate more by delaying preparation of academic tasks, sparing more time for fun and other activities, whereas allocating less time to study (Beck et al., 2000; Ferrari & Tice, 2000).

Besides procrastination, test anxiety can be used as a self-handicapping strategy (Smith et al., 1982). Although numerous studies showed negative effects of test anxiety on students' health (e.g., Kavakcı, Güler, & Çetinkaya, 2011) and academic outcomes (e.g., Brooks, Alshafei, & Taylor, 2015), some students may benefit from it by using it as a form of psychological self-protection (Thompson, 2013). Smith, Snyder, and Handelsman (1982) revealed that when test anxiety is perceived as a convincing explanation, test anxious students use their anxiety symptoms to obscure the lack of intelligence. In other words, the cause of poor performance was presented as test anxiety symptoms rather than their unintelligence. Hence their self-concept is protected. Test anxiety is classified as self-reported handicapping. Due to the fact that it does not require active creation of obstacles and the claim of it provides an explanation for failure or poor performance, it is less costly (Hirt et al., 2000; Leary & Shepperd, 1986). In addition, it is more tolerable by the educators rather than other forms of self-handicapping such as withdrawal of effort (Hirt, Deppe, & Gordon, 1991).

Unlike procrastination and test anxiety, self-compassion is not a self-handicapping strategy; it can be used as a reducing agent. Self-compassion staves the most important antecedents of self-handicapping,

which is a perceived threat to self-concept. Self-compassion is proposed as a healthier alternative approach to self (Neff, 2003a) in which self-worth is not based on success and capabilities; failure, inadequacy, and incompetency are accepted with the awareness of imperfect human nature (Marshall et al, 2015). In addition, unlike self-esteem, self-compassion does not deal with ego threats because other people's evaluation or ideal standards were not taken granted for self-evaluation (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005). Although the inverse association between self-compassion and self-handicapping theoretically fits well, it still needs further empirical support owing to the limited number of studies in which it was revealed that high self-compassionate people have lower tendency to self-handicap (e.g., Akin & Akin, 2015; Petersen, 2014).

## **1.2. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the present study was to examine the predictor role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion for the variation in university students' self-handicapping. Given this purpose, the answer of the following question was sought out.

How well do gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predict the variation in university students' self-handicapping?

## **1.3. Significance of the Study**

The current study, which examined the predictor role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion for the variation in university students' self-handicapping, is significant in several respects. To begin with, student achievement is one of the central

themes for all stakeholders of educational institutions and considerable efforts have been exerted on eliciting the obstacles and problems that students have to deal with on the road to achievement. Self-handicapping is one of them, which is used by people for the sake of short-term benefits, but has deleterious consequences on peoples' health, well-being and performances (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005). Short-term benefits of self-handicapping reduce negative implications of ego threat by externalizing the reasons for failure, and cloud the diagnosis of low ability (Brown & Kimble, 2009), decreasing fear of failure, and evaluation anxiety (Deppe & Harackiewicz, 1996). In other words, people engage in self-handicapping for the sake of maintaining positive self-evaluation (Hirt et al., 2000), however, it may cause a decrease in positive self-concept directly or indirectly. High self-handicappers not only use more dysfunctional coping strategies but also have more negative emotions and lower self-esteem (Zuckerman, Kieffer, & Knee, 1998), higher depression, anxiety and stress level (Sahranç, 2011), use more alcohol and drugs (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005), and more external locus of control and maladaptive perfectionism (Arazzini-Stewart & De George-Walker, 2014). In addition, self-handicapping negatively affected students' academic experiences and outcomes such as low school adjustment, high level of norm-breaking behavior and poor teacher relation (Määttä, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2002), more proneness to cheat (Özgüngör, 2008), and low GPA (Zuckerman et al., 1998). In this regard, it is of utmost importance to scrutinize university students' self-handicapping because it provides information about its correlates, which may be beneficial to prevent this behaviour and its detrimental effects.

Secondly, as being present for nearly four decades, self-handicapping is an old construct in Western literature and numerous studies have been conducted on it. However, the number of studies with Turkish sample is highly limited. The search engine of CoHE (Council of Higher Education)



Thesis Center showed that only 7 master theses and 1 dissertation examined self-handicapping between 2008 and 2014. In the same vein, a small number of articles (e.g. Akin & Akin, 2015; Elmas & Akfırat, 2014; Özgüngör, 2008) were written and most of them used the self-handicapping scales that were translated or developed by the authors who do not provide sufficient empirical support for the reliability and validity of the scales. In this regard, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing information about Turkish university students' self-handicapping tendencies that is measured with a reliable and valid instrument.

Thirdly, this study contributes to the literature in regard to gender differences in trait self-handicapping. Empirical studies, mainly conducted in laboratory environment, consistently pointed out a significant gender difference as a male dominance in behavioral self-handicapping (Brown et al., 2012; Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b, 1991), and conflicted results for self-reported handicapping (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; Snyder et al., 1985). Even though the literature is rich in terms of studies which examined gender differences in types of self-handicapping, the limited number of studies did not fill the gap for gender difference in trait self-handicapping, so this study may make a contribution in this area.

Fourthly, self-handicapping is mainly triggered in case of a threat to self-concepts (Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Snyder & Smith, 1982). In this regard, self-esteem is the mostly studied one, but it yielded contradictory findings with different samples (Prapavessis & Grove, 1998; Tice & Baumesiter, 1990). Self-compassion is another concept proposed as an alternative healthier attitude toward self with the claim that it has fewer drawbacks (Neff, 2003b; Neff, 2011), but its association with self-handicapping has not been adequately clarified yet. Up to our knowledge, in the reviewed

literature, the contribution of self-esteem and self-compassion for predicting self-handicapping has not been examined at the same time. This study might provide the opportunity to compare the predictor power of self-esteem and self-compassion in a single model.

Fifthly, procrastination and test anxiety are two important problematic areas in educational settings (Kim & Seo, 2015; Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Different reasons may lie behind these problems. In this regard, this study might shed light to how procrastination and test anxiety are related to self-handicapping.

#### **1.4. Definition of Terms**

**Self-handicapping:** Self-handicapping is defined as “finding or creating impediments that makes good performance less likely to protect the sense of self-competence” (Berglas & Jones, 1978, p. 201).

**Self-esteem:** Self-esteem is defined as overall evaluations of a person’s own worth, value and importance (Rosenberg, 1965).

**Procrastination:** Procrastination is defined as “the delay of a task or assignment that is under one’s control” (Ackerman & Gross, 2005, p. 5).

**Test-anxiety:** Test anxiety is defined as “the set of physiological and behavioral responses that come with concern about possible negative consequences or failure of an evaluative situation” (Zeidner, 1998, p. 17).

**Self-compassion:** Self-compassion is defined as “being open to and moved by one’s own suffering, experiencing feeling of caring and kindness toward oneself, taking an understanding non-judgmental attitude toward one’s inadequacies and failures, and recognizing that

one's own experience is a part of the common human experience" (Neff, 2003a, p. 224).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The literature review comprises seven sections: (1) self-handicapping, (2) gender differences in self-handicapping, (3) self-esteem, (4) procrastination, (5) test anxiety, (6) self-compassion, and (7) summary of the literature. In the first section, the definition, meaning, antecedents, types, and consequences of self-handicapping were briefly explained. The second section summarized the study findings regarding the gender differences in self-handicapping. The third section explicated both the importance of self-esteem in comprehending the self-handicapping concept and how people's self-esteem level influences their self-handicapping tendencies. In the fourth section, the definition, prevalence, causes, correlates, and consequences of procrastination, and the relationship between procrastination and self-handicapping were summarized. The fifth section included the definition, prevalence, correlates, and consequences of test anxiety and its association with self-handicapping. The sixth section explained the self-handicapping concept by clearing up its component and comparison to self-esteem, as well as, correlates of self-compassion and its association with self-handicapping. The last section summarized the reviewed literature.

#### **2.1. Self-Handicapping**

Currently, people live in an achievement-oriented society. The result of a performance is greatly valued and it has important effects on people. Success is associated with some other positive values including happiness, pride, competence, and efficacy, whereas failure brings to

mind negative values such as sadness, shame, incompetence, and weakness (Deppe & Harackiewicz, 1996). People generally strive for getting and maintaining a positive self-evaluation by trying the best they can, and in this way, they get the approval of other people. However, sometimes people are unable to achieve the desired success (Berglas, 1986). In these situations, some people incline to use self-protective strategies such as self-handicapping to preserve positive view of the self (Hirt et al., 2000).

Jones and Berglas first coined the self-handicapping term nearly four decades ago (1978). They defined self-handicapping as creating or claiming impediments that decrease the possibility of successful performance in order to protect self-competence (Jones & Berglas, 1978). Self-handicapping behaviors decrease the probability of success; however, they enable individuals to cover up their failures by creating handy excuses instead of facing the real cause, which is the lack of ability (Brown, 1998). To exemplify, if a self-handicapper performs poorly in an evaluative situation, s/he can explain the poor performance by using the impediment rather than incompetence. If s/he performs successfully despite the impediment, his/her competence is enhanced (Warner & Moore, 2004). Hirt, McCrea, and Boris (2003) elucidated self-handicapping with another example. In their example, a student goes to the cinema the night before the exam rather than studying. If he does not do well in the exam, he can present the cause as lack of studying. In this way, he obscures the lack of ability or intelligence. If he performs well, he may infer that he is intelligent or has ability because he succeeds in the exam without studying.

With a broader perspective, Berglas and Jones (1978) also define self-handicapping as “any action or choice of performance setting that enhance the opportunity to externalize (or excuse) failure and to

internalize (or reasonably accept credit for) success” (p. 406). According to Kelley’s (1972) discounting and augmentation principles, failure is externalized by attributing the reason to luck and situational factors; thus, self-esteem is protected. Success is internalized by attributing the reason to effort and ability; hence self-esteem is enhanced (Kelley, 1972). Some researchers believe that self-handicapping serve for both of these attributional goals (e.g. Jones & Berglas, 1978) but some of them believe that self-handicapping primarily serves for the self-protection goals rather than self-enhancement (e.g. Isleib, Vuchinich, & Tucker, 1988; Mayerson & Rhodewalt, 1988; Murray & Warden, 1992).

Furthermore, Rhodewalt et al. (1991) examined the role of discounting and augmentation in the preservation of self-esteem regarding self-handicapping. They found that after getting failure feedback, high self-handicapper with both low and high self-esteem discounted ability attribution and after getting success feedback, only high self-handicapper with high self-esteem augmented ability attribution. This finding showed that self-protection motive is more prevalent than self-enhancement motive of self-handicapping.

Feick and Rhodewalt (1997) claimed that laboratory studies generally focus on the self-protection function and rarely focus on self-enhancement function of self-handicapping, and they conducted a field study to examine the effect of self-handicapping on ability attribution (discounting and augmentation) and self-esteem in a naturalistic setting. At the beginning of the term, participants were assessed in terms of self-handicapping tendencies and self-esteem. Just after their first in-class exam, they filled a checklist including claimed handicaps items. After their exam grades were announced, they completed the measures of mood, self-esteem and ability attributions for their performance. Results revealed that high self-handicappers reported more excuses before the

test. In addition, it was found that failing students' self-handicapping was associated with discounting ability attribution and higher self-esteem and successful students' self-handicapping was associated with augmentation of ability attribution and enhanced self-esteem.

Although previous theories (e.g. Adler's theory, impression management, causal attribution, and self-serving attributions) provided a platform for the development of self-handicapping, it was developed by leaning on empirical findings (Higgins, 1990). In the first experimental study conducted by Berglas and Jones (1978), some participants were given a test that included mostly insoluble analogies (4 soluble, 16 insoluble) and others were given a test with more soluble analogies (4 insoluble, 16 soluble). Regardless of their actual performance, all participants were given success feedback; thus, a group of participant received contingent success feedback, whereas others received noncontingent success feedback. Before administering the second test, participants were provided with two types of drugs and they were informed that the drug called Pandocrin had an inhibiting effect on performance, whereas the other drug called Actavil had a facilitating effect. However, in reality, they had no effect on performance. The result of the study revealed that participants who received noncontingent success feedback after the first test chose to take performance-debilitating drug rather than performance-facilitating drug before the second test (Berglas & Jones, 1978).

Following the first experimental study, researchers continued to find empirical evidences for self-handicapping with experimental studies in laboratory settings, and most of these studies utilized the idea of presenting performance-inhibiting and performance-facilitating choice to participants with minor changes such as using alcohol, music, tape rather than drugs (e.g. Brown & Kimble, 2009; Kimble & Bryant, 2002; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982, Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986; Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b, 1991; Tice, 1991).

Martin, Marsh, Williamson, and Debus (2003) stated that generally, university students' self-handicapping is examined by using experimental manipulation or self-report measures in the literature and they conducted a qualitative study to gain more comprehensive knowledge about the way people use self-handicapping, the reasons for engaging in self-handicapping behavior and goal orientation of self-handicapper. High self-handicapper participants' responses to how they self-handicap prior to the exam or assignment included watching TV, going out, doing housework (i.e. cleaning wardrobe), visiting relatives and leaving study to the last minute. On the other hand, low self-handicapper participants did not engage in such behaviors, they were more aware of the distractions and their responses included studying at library to avoid distractions existing at home (i.e. television and food), refusing social invitation and not attending parties to be able to concentrate on their studies. High self-handicappers' reasons for engaging in self-handicapping behaviors included avoiding stress, diminishing the importance of the task and providing explanation for their poor performance. Participants' responses regarding the goal orientation showed that high self-handicappers were more ego-oriented and less task-oriented when compared to low self-handicappers. Some high self-handicapper participants stated that rather than mastering something, outperforming others makes them feel more successful because it is more visible. People who do not have the tendency to self-handicap do not know the strategic use of these kinds of behaviors and as a consequence they accept the face value of others' self-handicapping (Martin et al., 2003; Smith & Strube, 1991).

### **2.1.1. Antecedents of self-handicapping**

Reviewing antecedents of self-handicapping may facilitate comprehending the concept. Anticipated threat to self-concept including



self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth (Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Synder & Smith, 1982), self-presentational concerns (Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt et al., 1991), private/public expectation of success, self-focus/other-focus view (Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble & Hirt, 2005), uncertainty about one's ability (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Tucker, Vulchinich, & Sobell, 1981), types of feedback (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Brown & Kimble, 2009; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Tucker et al., 1981), importance of the task (Shepperd & Arkin, 1989a, 1989b), and pre-existence of an environmental handicap (Shepperd & Arkin, 1989a) are antecedents of self-handicapping.

One of the most prominent antecedents of self-handicapping is anticipated threat to self-concept. Self-handicapping strategies are used when people perceive that there is a social evaluative threat (Smith et al., 1983). Protecting self-worth is very important for some students, and when students fail at a given task in the academic environment, their self-worth is threatened (Martin et al., 2003). For some students, protecting their sense of ability is a priority because they give much importance to others' evaluations of their ability (Martin et al., 2003). Self-esteem is another broad self-concept that leads to self-handicapping in case of a threat to it (Synder & Smith, 1982). In order to protect their self-esteem, people attribute different causations to failure and success (Hirt et al., 1991). For the sake of protecting these self-concepts, people may choose to risk their own success. Since self-handicapping creates obstacles for performance, the success of the performance is jeopardized (Tice, 1991). Self-protection and self-enhancement are the two motives behind self-handicapping. Some self-handicappers want to utilize both self-protection and self-enhancement but some self-handicappers primarily want to utilize one of the two motives and the other motive is a bonus for them (Tice, 1991). When a self-handicapper performs poorly, the created or claimed impediment serves for self-

protection by providing a ready explanation for poor performance. When a self-handicapper performs well, the impediment serves for the self-enhancement because s/he succeeds despite the impediment.

Hirt, Deppe, and Gordon (1991) claimed that there was not a consensus on the purpose of self-handicapping; such that, some researchers presented the purpose of self-handicapping as self-esteem protection, and some of them emphasized impression management. Self-presentational concerns are antecedents of self-handicapping (Rhodewalt et al., 1991). Kolditz and Arkin (1982) proposed that self-handicapping is not only a self-attribution to competence, but also a self-presentation strategy in which self-handicappers want to manage their public appearance. In their experiment, they found that publicity increased the self-handicapping tendencies; people chose the performance enhancing option in private conditions, whereas they chose performance inhibiting options in public conditions. Not only the real but also the imagery audience affects people's self-handicapping tendencies. Moreover, Montgomery, Haemmerlie, and Zoellner (1996) found a positive correlation between imagery audience and self-handicapping.

Baumeister, Hamilton, and Tice (1985) revealed that performance was affected by both private and public expectation of success. They found that private expectancies of success enhanced performance, but public expectations of success affected performance in different ways regarding the performers' beliefs about whether others' success expectations were convincing or not. When the performer does not expect success privately, public expectations of success decrease the performance by putting pressure on the performer. When public expectancy of success is convincing, the performer starts to believe that s/he can succeed and her/his performance is enhanced. Performance is worse when a person expects failure privately, but others expect success. In another study,

Jones and Berglas (1978) argued that the occurrence of self-handicapping is more imminent when there is a private expectation of failure and public expectation of success. In addition, Shepperd and Arkin (1989b) found that high public self-conscious people handicapped more by choosing more debilitating music before performing a valid test.

Kimble and Hirt (2005) investigated the effect of public self-focus on self-handicapping inclinations. They explained self-focus as directing attention to oneself rather than others and the environment; other-focus as directing attention to other people and the environment rather than oneself. They manipulated self-focus versus other focus condition and found that men self-handicapped more when they were self-focused contrary to women.

Uncertainty about one's competence or ability is another antecedent of self-handicapping. People mostly initiate self-handicapping when they are not certain about their capabilities (Harris & Snyder, 1986; Warner & Moore, 2004). Berglas and Jones (1998) state that self-handicapping tendency is basically tied with uncertainty about one's competence, and they add that people who believe that they are competent and able to handle challenging life situations do not need the attributional benefit of self-handicapping. Instead of self-handicapping, they get the desired effects by goal directed actions. In the study conducted by Pyszczynski and Greenberg (1983), participants who perceived that success probability is low in an important intelligence test pay less effort to practice before the real test and they reported that it was a bad day for taking a test, and they were not well rested. When the probability of success in an important evaluative performance is perceived low, people have a greater tendency to use self-handicapping strategy, which is one of the defensive strategies (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1983).

The type of feedback is another antecedent of self-handicapping. Non-contingent success, contingent success, and failure feedback affect people's self-handicapping tendencies differently. Whereas the non-contingent success feedback is appraising people that they have done very well at an impossible task, the contingent success is appraising people that they have done very well at a possible task that they are most likely to achieve (Brown & Kimble, 2009). For example, in Kolditz and Arkin's (1982) study, a group of participants were given a booklet that includes 80% insoluble and 20% soluble analogies and the other group's participants were given a booklet that includes 80% soluble and 20% insoluble analogies. Non-contingent success feedback was given to the former group, and contingent success feedback was given to the latter group. Non-contingent success feedback includes high ambiguity, as people cannot be sure that the achievement is based on their true level of competence/abilities/intelligence. Similar to Kolditz and Arkin's study, some studies show that people are more inclined to self-handicapping, when they receive non-contingent success feedback (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Tucker et al., 1981). However, some others report that failure feedback both increases the likelihood of self-handicapping and impression management concerns (Brown & Kimble, 2009).

Literature shows that people use self-handicapping strategies for important ego-relevant tasks or performances (Shepperd & Arkin, 1989a, 1989b; Tice, 1991). For unimportant or less important tasks and performances, people do not need to risk their success by creating impediments because perceived threat to self-esteem is not so high and concerns for attributions of success and failure do not have high impact (Tice, 1991). In the studies conducted by Shepperd and Arkin (1989a; 1989b), the effect of task importance on self-handicapping was examined and half of the participants were informed that they were given a test,

which was a reliable and valid predictor of academic and career success and the other half of the participants were informed that they were given a new test, which has not been validated yet and had no predictive power. In this way, high task importance condition and low task importance condition were created; however, in reality, all participants were given the same test. The results showed that participants who were in high task importance condition self-handicapped more.

Pre-existence of an environmental handicap is another antecedent of self-handicapping. When an environmental handicap that provides acceptable explanation for poor performance exists, people do not need to create or claim another handicap. In the study conducted by Shepperd and Arkin (1989a), participants were asked to choose performance debilitating or facilitating music that they listened during a test performance, and they were randomly assigned to handicap-present or handicap-absent condition. In the handicap-present condition a participant would hear a high-pitched intermittent ringing noise while they were listening to their chosen music. The results showed that participants who viewed the test as important were more inclined to self-handicapping (choosing more debilitating music) only when they were in handicap-absent condition. In other words, high pitched intermittent ringing noise serve as an acceptable explanation for poor performance and choosing another performance debilitating music is not necessary in the handicap-present condition.

### **2.1.2. Types of self-handicapping**

There are two types of self-handicapping (Arkin & Baumgardner, 1985; Leary & Shepperd, 1986). Arkin and Baumgardner (1985) distinguish them as acquired impediment and claimed difficulties. Similarly, Leary and Shepperd (1986) denominate them as behavioral self-handicapping and self-reported handicapping.

Behavioral self-handicapping is actively creating impediments to successful performance (Brown et al., 2012). For instance, a student who stayed out late on the eve of an important exam gets a ready excuse for failure such as tiredness or lack of preparation rather than lack of ability (Warner & Moore, 2004). In a qualitative study conducted by Torbrand and Ellam-Dyson (2015), one participant reported that s/he does not put his/her full effort on any task because s/he fears that if s/he devotes his/her full effort and get poor grades, his/her self-esteem will be damaged. In this example, the student engages in behavioral self-handicapping by reducing the effort with the motive of self-protection.

Self-reported handicapping is claiming the existence of impediments to successful performance (Brown et al., 2012). For example, hypochondriacal people complain about their illness and physical symptoms and these complains provide ready excuses in evaluative situations, causation for their poor performance and additional rewards such as attention from other people (Smith et al., 1983).

These two types of self-handicapping are different from each other in terms of their cost and believability (Hirt et al., 2000). Behavioral self-handicapping is more costly because it decreases the possibility of success; however, it is more convincing (Leary & Shepperd, 1986). On the other hand, self-reported handicapping is less costly, but less believable.

Although behavioral and self-reported handicapping strategies share a common benefit that is providing causation for poor performances, the costs of them are different. Self-reported handicapping does not actually decrease the likelihood of performance success; however, behavioral handicapping does. In addition, when compared to self-reported handicaps, behavioral self-handicappers leave a worse impression. For

instance, the student who explains his/her failure by reporting high test-anxiety, rather than reduced effort is more acceptable by teachers. Thus, behavioral self-handicapping strategies are more costly than self-reported ones (Hirt et al., 1991).

The examples of behavioral self-handicapping include insufficient practice or preparation (Brown & Kimble, 2009; Deppe & Harackiewicz, 1996; Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble & Hirt, 2005; Rhodewalt, Saltzman, & Wittmer, 1984; Tice, 1991; Tice & Baumeister, 1990), reduced effort (Baumeister et al., 1985; Lay, et al., 1992; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1983; Rhodewalt & Fairfield, 1991), lack of sleep (Berglas & Jones, 1978), procrastination (Lay et al., 1992), eliciting performance inhibiting drugs or alcohol (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Bordini, Tucker, Vuchinich, & Rudd, 1986; Gibbons & Gaeddert, 1984; Higgins & Harris, 1988; Jones & Berglas, 1978; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Tucker et al., 1981; Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005), selecting extremely difficult performance goals (Greenberg, 1985), choosing distracting, performance-impairing music/tape (Brown & Kimble, 2009; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986; Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b; Tice, 1991), and staying out late a night before an important exam (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; Warner & Moore, 2004).

Self-reported handicapping includes reporting anxiety (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Paisley, 1984; Smith et al., 1982; Snyder & Smith, 1982), stress (Hirt et al., 1991), bad mood (Baumgardner et al., 1985), unfavorable conditions (Rhodewalt et al., 1984), hypochondriasis (Smith et al., 1983), social anxiety (Snyder & Higgins, 1988), shyness (Snyder et al., 1985; Snyder & Smith, 1986), traumatic life events (DeGree & Snyder, 1985), and physical symptoms (Mayerson & Rhodewalt, 1988; Rhodewalt et al., 1984).

Hirt, Deppe, and Gordon (1991) examined how people respond when they have an opportunity to choose different self-handicapping options, namely behavioral self-handicapping and self-reported self-handicapping. A group of the participants had the opportunity to practice before taking a diagnostic intellectual ability test, and another group of participants were informed that they were under a lot of stress. The participants who did not want to practice before the test chose behavioral self-handicapping, and the participants who reported high stress chose self-reported self-handicapping. When people are given the choice to use both self-reported and behavioral handicapping strategies that provide convincing excuses for poor performance, people prefer to use self-reported handicapping rather than behavioral self-handicapping because self-reported handicapping is less costly (Hirt et al., 1991).

Trait self-handicapping measured by Self-Handicapping Scale (Jones & Rhodewalt, 1982) does not differentiate between two types of self-handicapping. It encompasses items that are both related with behavioral and self-reported handicapping. In this study, trait self-handicapping was utilized.

### **2.1.3. Consequences of self-handicapping**

There are individual differences in using self-handicapping strategies (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; Hirt et al., 1991; Rhodewalt, 1990; Rhodewalt & Hill, 1995; Rhodewalt et al., 1991). Hence, the consequences of self-handicapping are not the same for all self-handicappers. The creators of the self-handicapping concept asserted that a self-handicapper cannot loose whatever the outcome is, if s/he gives more importance to the attributional implication of the performance than the achievement itself (Jones & Berglas, 1978).



In the short term, self-handicapping may have benefits. Self-handicapping creates opportunities to reduce the threat of failure by providing handy explanation to failure rather than low ability (Brown & Kimble, 2009). In addition, self-handicapping behaviors help to externalize failure by reducing the diagnosticity of the absence of the underlying ability (Brown, 1998). It helps to preserve positive self-evaluation (Hirt et al., 2000). In a qualitative study conducted by Martin, et al. (2003), some participants reported the benefits of self-handicapping and they said that presenting excuses for a failure (e.g. withdrawal of effort or procrastination) is easier than saying that I am not smart or good at it. Moreover, according to Snyder and Higgins (1988), self-handicapping reduces evaluation concerns, so people perform better because they focus on the task rather than evaluation concerns. Similarly, Deppe and Harackiewicz (1996) suggest that people who self-handicapped might be less anxious and less concentrated on the fear of failure during the performance because they already have had an explanation for failure.

Furthermore, Deppe and Harackiewicz (1996) claims that self-handicapping facilitate maintaining intrinsic motivation. They suggest that negative feedback diminishes the interest in a task and self-handicapping reduces the possibility of negative feedback by providing ready excuses, and in this way, it helps to increase task involvement and preserves positive motivation. The results of their study showed that high self-handicappers reported more enjoyment and greater task involvement when they did not practice much prior to the actual performance when compared to self-handicappers who practiced a lot.

Aforementioned studies adverted short-term benefits of self-handicapping. However, habitual self-handicapping have negative consequences in the long term and these negative consequences can be

summarized under three categories (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005). The first category includes self-handicapping behavior, which has direct negative effects on people. High self-handicappers use alcohol, marijuana and other drugs more than low self-handicappers. The second category includes performance decrement and its side effect on adjustment and well-being. The third category includes erroneous self-perception embodying self-deception (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005).

Zuckerman et al. (1998) find that higher trait self-handicapping creates a vicious circle in the long run. The results of the study reveal that self-handicapping is negatively associated with self-esteem and positively correlated with negative mood. High self-handicappers use more dysfunctional coping strategies such as denial, disengagement, self-focused rumination that produce negative emotions. Over time, lower self-esteem and higher negative mood are associated with higher self-handicapping. Moreover, the finding of the study conducted by Martin et al. (2003) showed that self-handicappers believe that they have very little or no control over their self-handicapping. They evaluate this finding from an educational perspective and state that perceived loss of control may lead to learned helplessness.

Self-handicapping may be advantageous for ability attribution but disadvantageous for interpersonal relationships (Hirt et al., 2003). In the study conducted by Luginbuhl and Palmer (1991), participants evaluate people who self-handicapped and who did not in a given scenario in several dimensions. Self-handicapped people were evaluated as more intelligent, knowledgeable, and having higher grades. However, they were seen as less motivated and less desirable for being a study mate. In addition, using less persuasive self-handicapping strategies brings the risk of being ashamed and labeled as a fraud and using more persuasive

self-handicapping strategies would decrease the actual performance (Shepperd & Arkin, 1989a).

Athletes who were low self-handicappers pay more effort to prepare before an important sports event when compared to high self-handicappers (Rhodewalt et al., 1984). Similar to sports field, in educational setting, high self-handicappers reduce effort and express more stress before the exam, and their exam performance are worse than the low self-handicappers (McCrea & Hirt, 2001). Several studies show negative association between self-handicapping and performance in school (Elliot & Church, 2003; McCrea & Hirt, 2001; Rhodewalt, 1990; Zuckerman et al., 1998). It was found as negative predictor of both exam performance and GPA (Elliot & Church, 2003). Additional mediation analysis yield that performance avoidance goal is a partial mediator of the relationship between self-handicapping and both exam performance and GPA (Elliot & Church, 2003).

Self-handicapping is fundamentally based on avoidance motivation (Elliot & Church, 2003). Self-handicappers want to avoid failure but they create impediment, which decrease the possibility of successful performance and increase the possibility of failure. According to Elliot and Church (2003), this situation seems contradictory at the first glance. However, they point out the difference between two types of failure. Specific failure is related with a given task, but global failure is related with intellect or personality. For self-handicappers, avoiding global failure is more important than avoiding specific failure.

Coping styles can be regarded as consequences of self-handicapping (Zuckerman et al., 1998). According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), there are two kinds of coping strategies, namely emotion-focused and problem-focused, to deal with distress. The problem-focused coping

strategy manages distress by changing the cause whereas the emotion-focused coping manages stress by handling the emotions derived from the distress. Zuckerman et al. (1998) claim that self-handicapping is a kind of emotion-focused coping rather than problem-focused coping. In evaluative situations, self-handicappers create obstacles to protect their self-esteem (emotion-focused coping) and they risk the probability of successful performance rather than paying effort to increase the probability of success (problem-focused coping). By doing this, they choose to keep positive emotions about the self rather than struggling with the evaluative situations effectively. Using a longitudinal design, they examined the effects of self-handicapping on coping, academic performances, adjustment related variables including self-esteem, affect, and the frequency of visiting health services. They found that high self-handicappers use more maladaptive coping strategies including denial, behavioral disengagement, mental disengagement, self-blame, and self-focused rumination. Besides these, a negative correlation was found between self-handicapping and GPA, the higher the self-handicapping score, the lower the GPA. This negative correlation is mediated by study habits. High self-handicappers reported that they spent less time for exam preparation and use less efficient methods. Self-handicapping is negatively associated with self-esteem and positive affect. High self-handicappers have low self-esteem and more negative affect. Furthermore, self-handicapping and frequency of visiting university health service is positively associated. When evaluating the relationship between self-handicapping and adjustment related variables over time, it was found that self-handicapping yields poor adjustment and poor adjustment yields self-handicapping, therefore this study also provides evidence for a vicious cycle of self-handicapping.

Moreover, high self-handicappers have higher depression, anxiety and stress level (Sahranç, 2011). Self-handicappers reported low level of self-

esteem, school adjustment and achievement, high level of norm-breaking behavior and poor teacher relations (Määttä et al., 2002), and they are more prone to cheating (Özgüngör, 2008), have more negative automatic thoughts and lower intrinsic motivation (Kapıkıran, 2012). In addition, they use more external locus of control and maladaptive perfectionism (Arazzini-Stewart & De George-Walker, 2014).

## **2.2. Gender Difference in Self-Handicapping**

Gender is an important variable, which creates individual differences in self-handicapping literature (Hirt et al., 1991). Some researchers used only male samples (e.g. Deppe & Harackiewicz, 1996; Greenberg, 1985; Higgins & Harris, 1988; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt et al., 1991, Tucker et al., 1981) whereas some others used only female samples (e.g. DeGree & Snyder, 1985; Greenberg et al., 1984; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1983; Smith et al., 1982; Smith et al., 1983) while examining self-handicapping. Contrary to these single sex sample research studies, the majority of the studies used mixed gender samples and some of them examined the contribution of gender to self-handicapping.

There is a salient gender difference in people's self-handicapping tendencies (Brown & Kimble, 2009; Hirt & McCrea, 2009). Numerous studies showed that men behaviorally self-handicapped more than women (Baumeister et al., 1985; Brown et al., 2012; Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble & Hirt, 2005; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b, 1991). For instance, Brown and colleagues (2012) stated that women do not use behavioral self-handicapping strategies in general, but they do when their motivation to grow and improve their abilities is low. Furthermore, females are less likely to both engage in self-handicapping and accept others' self-handicapping. Men evaluated a self-handicapper more positively while

women were more negative and judgmental for behavioral self-handicappers (Hirt et al., 2003).

Men behaviorally self-handicapped more by choosing performance-inhibiting drugs, CD, tapes (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Brown et al., 2012; Brown & Kimble, 2009), drinking alcohol (Tucker et al., 1981), studying for fewer hours (Warner & Moore, 2004), decreasing performance (Baumeister et al., 1985); and practicing less (Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble, Kimble, & Croy, 1998; Kimble & Hirt, 2005).

Although literature provides consistent findings regarding men's dominance on behavioral self-handicapping, gender difference in claimed self-handicapping yields contradictory findings. Feick and Rhodewalt (1997) found no significant gender difference in claimed self-handicapping. Similarly, Hirt et al. (1991) revealed that men and women do not differ in terms of self-reported handicapping. When social anxiety is presented as an acceptable explanation for failure in an evaluative situation, socially anxious men report more anxiety symptoms and men use social anxiety as a self-handicapping strategy, but women do not (Snyder et al., 1985). In Strubes's (1986) study, participants were provided a checklist that included factors (i.e. heavy course load, sickness, lack of sleep, other exams), which obstruct them in showing their true level of ability. Result indicated that high-self handicapper men reported higher number of excuses just after the exam and before the next exam; however the reports of high and low self-handicapper female did not differ significantly. Rhodewalt and Hill (1995) replicated this part of Strubes's study and they revealed that men reported more excuses than females. On the contrary, Feick and Rhodewalt (1997) also replicated this part and they did not find significant gender by level of self-handicapping interaction in predicting claimed self-handicapping.

Brown and Kimble (2009) revealed that men's self-handicapping is related with the type of feedback; rather than non-contingent success feedback, failure feedback increases self-handicapping tendencies of men. Their results also showed that women's self-handicapping is related more with their emotional reactions such as self-doubt, worrying about others' opinions regarding their performance results, feeling unconfident in evaluative situations. Snyder, Ford, and Hunt (1985) speculated that men's higher inclination to self-handicapped is due to their higher sensitivity to negative implications of failure.

Studies that examined gender difference in trait self-handicapping with the help of Self-Handicapping Scale (Jones & Rhodewalt, 1982) yielded different results. In order to control the possible gender difference in self-handicapping, Martin and Brawley (2002) entered gender in the first step in a regression model and they found that gender did not significantly contribute to self-handicapping. Zuckerman and Tsai (2005) also found no significant gender difference in trait self-handicapping. However, in Elliot and Church's (2003) study, gender was found as a significant predictor of self-handicapping, and self-handicapping tendency of female was greater than that of male. They did not report the variance explained by the gender. Similarly, in Warner and Moore's (2004) study, female participants' self-handicapping scores were significantly higher than the males' scores. Specifically, female participants were more prone to use mild illness for removing pressure and their emotions interfered with their performance more than males.

### **2.3. Self-Esteem**

The "self" is a complex concept including many subdimensions, and for this reason, self-derived topics were used as an attempt to explain it (Baumeister, 1998). Among these self-derived concepts, self-esteem is

the most prevalently used one due to causal effects on many different parts of human life (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Global self-esteem is defined as an attitude toward self, which depends upon the feeling of how capable, worthwhile, and successful as a person someone feels (Joseph, 1994; Rosenberg, 1965). Some researchers objected, expanded and reframed its theoretical background and proposed other forms of self-esteem such as contingent self-esteem (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003), optimal self-esteem (Kernis, 2003), and domain specific self-esteem (Harter, 1999). Due to the fact that global self-esteem is the oldest version of the self-esteem, and can be applicable to a wide range of different samples, it is the most frequently used one, and an enormous body of research related to it was conducted. In this study, global self-esteem was used for representing self-esteem.

Self-esteem is not only the central factor in describing self-handicapping (Warner & Moore, 2004), but also the most apparent individual differences variable that is associated to self-handicapping (Harris & Snyder, 1986). Before an important performance, people may feel that their self-esteem is threatened (Hirt et al., 1991). People engage in self-handicapping behavior when they anticipate threat to their self-esteem (Snyder & Smith, 1982; Tice, 1991). If the performance is successful, self-esteem maintains or enhances. If the performance results in failure, self-esteem decreases (Hirt et al., 1991).

Martin and Brawley (2002) suggest that not only the one's opinions regarding her/his capabilities in a particular situation but also the general opinions about the self may play important roles in determining self-handicapping. In other words, domain specific self-esteem and trait self-esteem may have determinant value for self-handicapping. In their study, among the six predictors, general self-esteem explained most of the



variance in both behavioral (17%) and self-reported handicapping (19%). Feick and Rhodewalt (1997) also revealed that 20% of the variance were shared by self-handicapping. In another study, Warner and Moore (2004) found that self-handicapping and self-esteem shared 6.25% of the variance.

Literature provides contradictory findings regarding the relationship between self-handicapping and self-esteem (Martin & Brawley, 2002). Some studies revealed that self-handicapping is negatively related with self-esteem, and low self-esteem participants have a higher tendency to use self-handicapping (Elmas & Akfirat, 2014; Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; Prapavessis & Grove, 1998; Rhodewalt, 1990, Warner & Moore, 2004). In contrast to the findings of these negative relations, Tice and Baumeister (1990) revealed a positive correlation, which showed that high self-esteem people use self-handicapping more frequently than low self-esteem people when they are suspicious about the success of their performance.

Martin and Brawley (2002) proposed an explanation for these contradictory findings and they stated both low and high self-esteem participants have a tendency to self-handicap, but with different purposes. Similarly, Tice (1991) found that self-handicapping motives are different for people who have high self-esteem or low self-esteem. People with high self-esteem use self-handicapping in order to enhance their success and gain credit for their success, whereas people with low self-esteem use self-handicapping to protect their self-esteem in failure situations (Tice, 1991). In contrast, Rhodewalt et al. (1991) revealed that student who handicapped and got failure feedback had higher self-esteem and positive mood compared to students who did not handicap, and this finding provided evidence for self-esteem protection function of self-handicapping for high self-esteem people.

Individual differences in self-esteem and self-esteem related variables might affect people's self-handicapping tendencies (Tice, 1991). Studies also pay attention to the certainty of self-esteem in regard to self-handicapping because not only the level but also the uncertainty of self-esteem contributes to the self-handicapping. Formulation of self-handicapping concept includes uncertain sense of self-esteem (Harris & Snyder, 1986). Harris and Snyder examined the effect of gender, level of self-esteem and certainty of self-esteem on self-handicapping. Their study findings revealed that males who are uncertain about their self-esteem self-handicapped more than females who are uncertain about their self-esteem and males who are certain about their self-esteem.

Moreover, Martin and Brawley (2002) examine the direct relationship between self-handicapping and two types of self-esteem including physical self-esteem and general self-esteem in an athlete sample. They find significant negative relationships between self-handicapping and two types of self-esteem. The lower general and physical self-esteem are related with higher self-handicapping. In addition, they investigate the role of gender, general self-esteem, physical self-esteem, self-handicapping motives (protection and enhancement), general self-esteem by motives interaction and physical self-esteem by motives interaction in predicting behavioral and self-reported handicapping. The findings revealed that only general self-esteem was a significant predictor and explained 17% of the variance in behavioral and 19 % of the variance in self-reported handicapping.

## **2.4. Procrastination**

Procrastination has emerged as one of the most prevalent problems of university students. Researchers do not reach an agreement on the

definition of procrastination because they approach the construct from different perspectives such as differential psychology, motivational and volitional psychology, clinical psychology, etc. (Klingsieck, 2013). It is viewed as a personal trait, motivational failure, self-regulation problem (Häfner, Oberst & Stock, 2014; Klingsieck, 2013; Steel, 2007), and time management deficit (Ziesat, Rosenthal & White, 1978). Steel (2007) proposes that diverse attempt for refining the concept is complementary not contradictory. According to Silver (1974), procrastination is to delay the task to an optimal time with the purpose of increasing the likelihood of successful completion of it. Senecal, Koestner, and Vallerand (1995) explain the procrastination as a failure to motivate oneself to complete the task that should be done within a determined time period. According to Glick and Orsillo (2015), procrastination is disparity between the intended and actual time for beginning and accomplishing the task. Tuckman (1991, p.474) explains the concept as “the tendency to put off or completely avoid an activity under one’s control.” Steel (2007, p.66) defines it as “... a postponing, delaying, or putting off a task or decision”. Although researchers present various definitions to the concept, all of these definitions share a common element, which is postponing a task.

Procrastination is quite a common problem among university students (Kim & Seo, 2015) and the amount of procrastination augment from freshman to senior years (Hill, Hill, Chabot, & Barrall, 1978). According to Ellis and Knaus’s (1977) estimation, 70 % of the university students procrastinate. In the study conducted by Rothblum, Solomon, and Murakami (1986), 40 % of the students reported high level of procrastination. In another study, Solomon and Rothblum (1984) revealed that approximately 50 % of the students procrastinated different types of academic tasks including writing term paper (46 %), studying for an exam (27.6 %), doing reading assignments (30.1 %), fulfilling administrative duties (10.6 %), attendance tasks (23 %) and general

school activities (10.2 %). Uzun-Özer, Demir, and Ferrari (2009) examined the prevalence of the procrastination among Turkish students and they found that 52 % of the students were procrastinators.

Procrastination affects students' educational outcomes directly or indirectly. Beyond the academic domain, there is a negative correlation between procrastination and health (Sirois, 2004; Sirois, Melia-Gordon, & Pychyl, 2003; Stead, Shanahan, & Neufeld, 2010). Plenty of research studies, also showed that procrastination is negatively associated with academic performance (Kim & Seo, 2015; van Eerde, 2003). To be more specific, procrastination yielded lower assignment grades (Michinov, Brunot, Le Bohec, Juhel, & Delaval, 2011; Tice & Baumeister, 1997), course withdrawal (Semb, Glick, & Spencer, 1979), lower course grade (Beswick, Rothblum, & Mann, 1988; Fritzsche, Young, & Hickson, 2003; van Eerde, 2003) and lower GPA (Balkis, 2013; Fritzsche et al., 2003; Jackson, Weiss, Lundquist, & Hooper, 2003; Klassen, Krawchuk, & Rajani, 2008; Rothblum et al., 1986; van Eerde, 2003).

The negative effects of procrastination on students' health, academic performance, and achievement are evident. Therefore, the questions of which factors enhance or diminish students' procrastination and why students procrastinate gain importance. Procrastination is positively associated with perfectionism (Brownlow & Reasinger, 2000; Flett, Hewitt, & Martin, 1995), boredom proness (Ferrari, 2000), irrational cognition (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984), anxiety (Beswick et al., 1988; Flett, Blackstein, & Martin, 1995; Fritzsche et al., 2003; Glick & Orsillo, 2015; Rothblum et al., 1986; Senecal et al., 1995; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984), depression (Beswick et al.; Flett et al., 1995; Senecal et al., 1995; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984), guilt (Pychyl, Lee, Thibodeau & Blunt, 2000), stress (Jackson, Weiss, & Lundquist, 2000; Tice & Baumeister, 1997), and negatively associated with optimism (Jackson et al., 2000),

self-efficacy (Ferrari, Parker & Ware, 1992; Klassen et al., 2008; Tuckman 1991) and self-esteem (Beswick et al., 1988; Ferrari, 1991,1994, 2000; Senecal et al., 1995; Solomon & Rothblum,1984).

Students higher in academic values are less likely to procrastinate (Glick & Orsillo, 2015). Burnam, Komarraju, Hamel, and Nadler (2014) revealed that students who are organized and expend effort to reach high personal standards procrastinate less in their academic tasks (studying for exam, writing papers and reading assignments). In addition, they found that self-determined motivation of students is conversely associated with procrastination. Similarly, students who have higher intrinsic motivation are less likely to procrastinate (Lee, 2005; Senecal et al, 1995). According to Brownlow and Reasinger's (2000) study finding, low extrinsic motivation, having external locus of control and making external attributions contributed significantly and positively to students' academic procrastination. Senecal and colleagues (1995) argued that unmotivated students and students whose primary motivation sources are external postpone until the last minute to feel the pressure to start. Balkis (2013) points out the mediator role of rational beliefs about studying in relation to procrastination, academic satisfaction and achievement. This finding supports that students who have high level of rational beliefs may be more satisfied and more successful because they complete their academic tasks and do not engage in academic procrastinatory behavior. 'My worthiness depends on how well I do, so I must do well' (Ellis & Knaus, 1977) and 'I should be in a good mood to start to study' (Dryden & Sabelus, 2012) are examples of irrational thoughts behind the procrastination.

Students procrastinate with different reasons such as fear of failure, not meeting others' expectation, not reaching own standards, lack of self-confidence, finding the task aversive, laziness, having too many other

things to do, uneasiness in decision making (Brownlow & Reasinger, 2000; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Senecal and colleagues (1995) argued that completing a task not only depends on fear of failure, but also to what extent the task is interesting and valuable. In other words, low level of intrinsic motivation can be another reason for procrastination. According to Ellis and Knaus (1977), one of the most important causes of procrastination is having irrational beliefs. Similarly, the study conducted by Torbrand and Ellam-Dyson (2015), showed evidence that irrational beliefs caused procrastination. In this study, students were taught to become aware of their irrational thoughts related to procrastination and to replace them with rational ones. As a result, the procrastination level of students diminished.

Moreover, Pychyl and colleagues (2000) find out that higher level of trait procrastination is related with negative affect; however, students do not report negative feelings at the time of procrastination. In other words, procrastinators have negative feelings only in the long term. Furthermore, procrastination is negatively associated with students' flow experiences (Lee, 2005). Flow experiences mean devoting full energy and concentration on a task with pleasure (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Lee (2005) examined the predictor power of sub-dimensions of flow experience regarding procrastination and revealed that students who perceived that the challenge of the task exceed their skills, who lack precise goals, who did not concentrate and who were highly self-conscious were more likely to procrastinate. In addition, self-consciousness was found as the most powerful predictor. This finding showed that high procrastinators give much importance to others' evaluation.

Procrastination can be used as a kind of self-handicapping strategy (Beck et al., 2000; Ferrari & Tice, 2000). Although these two constructs

overlaps, procrastination is not a subset of self-handicapping (Beck et al., 2000; Lay et al., 1992). Procrastination and self-handicapping have intersections in terms of motive. Based on the clinical and counseling observations, people may use procrastination to protect their self-esteem, but it should be carefully considered that self-esteem protection is not the only motive behind procrastination (Lay et al., 1992). Self-handicappers used their created or claimed impediments to obscure the negative evaluations of others when their performance resulted in failure (Berglas & Jones, 1978). Similarly, procrastinators diminish others' negative evaluations about their true level of ability by delaying the completion of the task. One cannot decide whether procrastinator is successful or not with an incomplete task. Furthermore, when the task was not completed successfully, procrastinators have a ready excuse, which is inadequate time rather than lack of intelligence (Ferrari, 1991). Shortly, the lack of time is used as an impediment.

Literature showed that self-handicapping is positively associated with procrastination. Ferrari (1991) revealed that procrastinators are more likely than non-procrastinators to choose distracting, debilitating music while completing a cognitive intelligence task. The results of this study showed that procrastinators have a higher tendency to self-handicap when compared to non-procrastinators. Moreover, Beck, Koons, and Milgrim (2000) found out that high self-handicappers procrastinated more by studying less and postponing the exam preparation than low self-handicapper did. Similarly, Ferrari and Tice (2000) found out that procrastinators were more inclined to self-handicapping by spending less time for preparing a test and allocating more time for fun and alternative tasks when the task was presented as important and evaluative of cognitive skills.

The results of the study conducted by Lay, Knish and Zanna (1992) showed these two constructs were not identical but procrastination can be used as a self-handicapping strategy. In their first study, before the test was administered, students were given an opportunity to practice for the test during a regular class hour and they were informed that the practice might improve their test performance. Trait self-handicappers practice less by answering fewer questions. On the other hand, no significant relation was found between trait procrastination and the number of practice questions answered. In their second study, five days before the actual test day, students were given a practice booklet, which they could take home to prepare for the test. Both trait self-handicapper and trait procrastinator delayed practicing.

## **2.5. Test Anxiety**

Academic situations at a university environment can be categorized into three main important types as attending class, studying outside class and taking test. In these academic settings, students experience different kinds of emotions that are significantly related to motivation, achievement, learning strategies, cognitive resources, and self-regulation (Pekrun et al., 2002). Anxiety is one of the most frequently reported emotions by students in academic settings (Pekrun et al., 2002). It can be aroused in different ways. Evaluative situations generally stimulate anxiety and it takes the form of test anxiety, which is not only comprised of emotion. Test anxiety is a common phenomenon and it gradually increases possibly due to both an increase in the number of tests and the attached pressure in the educational system (McDonald, 2001).

Like many other psychological constructs, there is not only one single definition of test anxiety that researchers have consensus on. Different researchers proposed different explanations to it. The definition of test



anxiety evolved and expanded with the passage of time (Stöber, 2004; Zeidner, 1998). Suinn (1968, p.385) explained it as “an inability to think or remember, a feeling of tension, and difficulty in reading and comprehending simple sentences or directions on an examination”. From a more comprehensive perspective, Zeidner (1998) defined it as the combination of phenomenological, physiological and behavioral reactions when one thinks about negative possible consequences of evaluative situations or tests.

With a meta-analysis of 562 test anxiety studies, Hembree (1988) concluded that children do not experience high level test anxiety in early grades, but the test anxiety level increases dramatically between grades, 3 and 5, and remains constant through high school and decreases at university. Chapell and colleagues (2005) compared the test anxiety level of undergraduate and graduate students and found that undergraduate students have higher test anxiety than graduate students. In different grade levels, women have higher test anxiety than males (Brooks et al., 2015, Chapell et al., 2005; Hembree, 1988; Kavakcı, Semiz, Kartal, Dikici, & Kuğu, 2014; McDonald, 2001). With a multi-cultural study including twelve countries, Seipp and Schwarzer (1996) also revealed that female students (except China) experience more test anxiety than males.

The prevalence of test anxiety differs from sample to sample. Turner, Beidel, Huges and Turner (1993) found that 41% of the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade African-American students were test-anxious. Kavakcı, Semiz, Kartal, Dikici, and Kuğu (2014), examined the prevalence of test anxiety among Turkish students who were going to take the university entrance exam and they found that 48% of the students were test anxious. In another study, the prevalence of test anxiety among Turkish medical college students was found as 15.8% (Kavakcı et al., 2011). In a similar vein,

DordiNejad and his colleagues (2011) found that 56% of the Iranian medical college students experienced test anxiety at the mediocre (35.3%) or high level (20.7%). In addition, McDonald (2001) pointed out that many students experience test anxiety, and test anxiety should be considered in a continuum rather than present-absent dichotomy. Shortly, test anxiety is experienced by considerable portion of the students with varying degrees (Dan, Bar Ilan, & Kurman, 2014).

According to Liebert and Morris (1967), worry and emotionality were two components of test anxiety. Worry refers to the cognitive component that includes thoughts about evaluative situations, possible negative outcomes, and how others view them. Emotionality refers to perceptions of automatic responses aroused by the evaluative tests. According to Sarason (1984), test anxiety has four subdimensions: Worry, test-irrelevant thinking, tension and bodily symptoms. Hodapp and Benson (1997) revealed three factors of test anxiety: Worry, emotionality and lack of confidence. In this study, test anxiety is measured with a single factor.

Test anxious students experience physical symptoms such as increased heart rates, rapid breathing, sweating, dizziness, (Black 2005; Cizek & Burg, 2006). They may feel distress, jittery, panic, anxious, tense, troubled, and uneasiness (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). Furthermore, they have more irrational and negative thoughts (Wong, 2008). Thinking about the possible poor performance and further negative consequences of failure, and comparing themselves to others are the examples of negative thoughts that may interfere with the students' actual performances (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). Wong (2008) revealed that test anxiety was significantly and positively related with cognitive triad (negative schemata of self, world, and future), dysfunctional attitudes (cognitive distortions in the value systems of approval, love, achievement, perfectionism, entitlement, omnipotence, and autonomy),

negative automatic thoughts, and irrational beliefs, but only negative view of self significantly contributed to test anxiety. Sarason (1984) proposed that test anxious students deal with internal distractions such as self-preoccupying worry and self-doubt in evaluative situations, and these internal distractions lead to poor performance by diminishing their concentration on the actual task. In addition to the irrational thoughts, thoughts that are not relevant to the testing may also decrease student's concentration and performances such as daydreaming, thinking about being somewhere else or an upcoming event (Sarason, 1984; Sarason & Sarason, 1990).

Test anxious students are more prone to depression, social phobia, attention deficit, and hyperactivity disorder (Kavakcı et al., 2011). They spend more time on the Internet, report more suicide attempt, and have higher trait anxiety and social anxiety (Kavakcı et al., 2014). There is an inverse relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem; so high test anxious students have lower self-esteem (Dan et al., 2014; Hembree, 1988).

In addition, high test-anxious students use more maladaptive perfectionism and avoidant goal orientation (Eum & Rice, 2011). Stoeber, Feast and Hayward (2009) examined the relationships among test anxiety, self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism. (Self-oriented perfectionism refers to striving for reaching excessively high standards, which were established by one for fulfilling their own expectations whereas socially prescribed perfectionism refers to striving for reaching high standards that were set by others to gain their acceptance.) They revealed that only socially prescribed perfectionism known as a maladaptive form of perfectionism is positively associated with total test anxiety.

Test anxiety is important in predicting students' achievement, motivation, and academic self-concept (Pekrun et al., 2002). Test anxiety blocks students' performances during the test (Meijer, 2001). It decreases performance and it is positively associated with defensiveness, fear of evaluation and other kinds of anxiety (Hembree, 1988). Anxiety symptoms are triggered by ego-threatening situations; these symptoms impede the full concentration on the task, hence it diminishes performance (Sarason, 1961). For less demanding and less difficult task, anxiety does not lead a dramatic decrease on performance (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). When the task is perceived as difficult, highly test anxious students perform poorer (Hembree, 1988)

Numerous studies showed an inverse relationship between test anxiety and different forms of achievement indicators such IQ scores, aptitude tests, course grades, and GPA (Hembree, 1988; Sarason, 1961). Eum and Rice (2011) revealed that low test-anxious students performed better on a recall test and their GPA were higher than the high test-anxious students. Chapell et al. (2005) examined the relationship between test anxiety and students' GPA at both undergraduate and graduate level and found an inverse relationship between the two variables for both samples. Other researchers empirically support the inverse relationship between test anxiety and achievement (e.g. Brooks et al., 2015; Eum & Rice, 2011). In addition, the literature pointed out that worry is the major component of test anxiety, which deteriorates students' performance (Sarason, 1984). The general notion about this inverse relationship between test anxiety and achievement is that test anxiety lowers student achievement and causes poor performance (Hembree 1988); however, Tobias (1985) proposed that poor performance causes test anxiety and he added that having a history of poor performance, inadequate study skills and test-taking skills lead to test anxiety.

Aforementioned studies showed the negativity of test anxiety on students' health, and academic process and outcomes. Although test anxiety is an undesirable characteristic, a group of people may benefit from it. They use test anxiety as a form of psychological self-protection, and in this way, they maintain a primary gain (Thompson, 2013). Test anxiety provides a ready excuse for potential failure. When students perform poorly on a test, attributable reasons are test anxiety and its symptoms rather than lack of intellect or ability. The deleterious effect of test anxiety on performance was widely accepted, so test anxiety is a plausible explanation for a failure.

Smith et al. (1982) examined whether students use test anxiety as a self-handicapping strategy in evaluative situations. Before administering the intelligence test, they created four different groups based on the test anxiety instructions and evaluative nature of the test. The first group was told that the test is a valid intelligence test but the level of test anxiety decreases performance, so the actual performance can be obscured by test anxiety. The second group was told that the test is a valid intelligence test and it is not affected by test anxiety in any way. For the third group, the intelligence test is told to be evaluative, but they did not receive instructions about the test anxiety. For the fourth group, the test is not evaluative (it is not presented as a valid intelligence test) and they did not received instruction about the test anxiety. The results showed that high test-anxious students use their test anxiety symptoms in a self-protective fashion when test anxiety was presented as a factor, which inhibits performance. When test anxiety was presented as an inert factor for performance, students reported less anxiety symptoms. Shortly, students use test anxiety as a self-handicapping strategy when they are convinced that test anxiety is a plausible and acceptable explanation for their poor performances. Subsequent researchers point out a positive

relationship between self-handicapping and test anxiety (Lay, et al., 1992; Rhodewalt, 1990; Thomas & Gadbois, 2007).

## **2.6. Self-Compassion**

Self-compassion has been rooted in Eastern philosophy for a very long time, but it is relatively a recent concept in Western literature (Neff, 2003b). As stated by Neff (2003b), the definition of self-compassion is derived from the general definition of compassion. Self-compassion includes three dimensions: (a) *self-kindness*, (b) *common humanity*, and (c) *mindfulness*. These three dimensions exist as opposites of self-judgment, isolation and over-identification (Neff, 2003a). Self-kindness refers to being kind to oneself, when experience failure, incompetence and suffering rather than being self-judgmental and self-critical. Common humanity refers to accepting one's own experience as a part of larger human experience rather than thinking that I was the only person who experiences this. *Mindfulness* refers to being aware of negative thoughts and feelings, handling them in a balanced manner rather than exaggerating or overidentifying them (Neff, 2003b).

Self-compassion is introduced as an alternative way of approaching to the self (Neff, 2003b). Self-esteem has been the most prevalent concept used as an indicator of healthy representation of the self. However, some researchers pointed out the drawbacks of self-esteem. High self-esteem may lead self-regulation failure by setting very high and unrealistic goals that exceed their capacities, so the possibility of failure increases (Baumeister, Heatherton & Tice, 1993). A self-focus on self-esteem may provide less stable feeling of self-worth (Neff & Vonk, 2009), resulted in selfishness (McMillan, 1994), and lead negative reactions and alienation from others (Baumeister et al., 2003). In addition, in case of ego-threat, it may lead violence and aggression (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996).

According to Neff (2003a), self-compassion provides positive psychological outcomes just like self-esteem, but it has fewer shortcomings when compared to self-esteem. For instance, self-esteem is affected by others' performance evaluations or ideal standards; however, self-compassion is free from evaluative threats because self-compassion includes a holistic self-evaluation which encompasses negative and positive sides, accepting these sides as a part of larger human experience, and behaving kindly to the self (Neff et al., 2005).

Marshall et al. (2015) presented the difference between self-esteem and self-compassion. According to self-esteem perspective, low self-esteem is perceived as a very bad characteristic and the need for high self-esteem is highly emphasized to succeed. In addition, the worthiness of a man depends on how much he is capable and successful. They added that rather than inflating the importance of self-esteem for being a successful person, self-compassion provides an alternative frame in which all humans are imperfect, and failures, inadequacies, difficult time periods are parts of human experience. People should show themselves patience, if it is required, forgive themselves and behave kindly in these difficult circumstances. In other words, according to self-esteem perspective, self-worth is based on a condition such as being competent, intelligent, or successful; however, according to self-compassion perspective, self-worth is preserved whatever the conditions are.

Neff (2003a) proposed that self-compassionate people transform negative self-related emotions to positive ones and they do not need to repress or shelter their inadequacies or weaknesses. They engage in less self-condemnation because they accept these and pay effort to alter and develop them. Neff et al. (2005) claimed that if a person approaches to failure with compassion, s/he does not need to disown or suppress

negative emotions. Conversely, s/he is willing to accept and experience these negative emotions so as to let them go. They also suggest that after a failure, shame and accusation are replaced with compassion with the idea of imperfect human nature. Similarly, Leary, Tate, Adams, Allen, and Hancock (2007) found that self-compassionate people monitor their reactions to unpleasant self-relevant events such as failure, rejection, and embarrassment more successfully. When they face a negative situation, they experience less negative emotions and they engage in less maladaptive rumination; they accept their responsibilities in these negative situations. In addition, rather than criticizing themselves harshly, they evaluate their actual performances.

Some personal features may affect self-compassion level of individuals. Literature pointed out a significant relationship between gender and self-compassion, and it was consistently found that females have lower self-compassion level (Neff 2003a, Neff et al., 2005, Neff & Vonk, 2009). Similarly, a recent meta-analysis including 88 different study samples showed that men are more self-compassionate than women (Yarnell et al., 2015). As for age, Neff and Vonk (2009) found out that self-compassion increase with aging. However, in another study, Neff and McGeehee (2010) did not detect a significant difference between adolescents' and young adults' self-compassion level (Neff, & McGeehee, 2010).

Plenty of research indicates that self-compassion is positively associated with desired outcomes and negatively associated with undesired outcomes (Petersen, 2014). Research studies indicate that self-compassion is positively associated with psychological health (Neff, 2011; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007), psychological well-being (Allen, Goldwasser & Leary, 2012; Bluth & Blanton, 2014; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff & McGeehee, 2010; Neff, Pisitsungkagarn, &



Hsieh, 2008; Woo Kyeong, 2013), improvement in body satisfaction (Albertson, Neff, & Dill-Shackleford, 2015), life satisfaction (Neff, 2003a), agreeableness, extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011), emotional intelligence (Heffernan, Quinn Griffin, McNulty, & Fitzpatrick, 2010), social connectedness and secure attachment style (Neff & McGeehee, 2010), self-efficacy (Iskender, 2009), perceived competence, adaptive motivational patterns (Neff et al., 2005), and self-esteem (Barry, Loflin, & Doucette, 2015; Neff & Vonk, 2009). Moreover, Marshall et al. (2015) examined the predictor role of self-compassion, self-esteem and their interaction regarding the mental health in an adolescent sample and they found that self-compassion has a moderator role between self-esteem and mental health. When a person is highly self-compassionate, low self-esteem has a little effect on his/her mental health. In other words, self-compassion lessens the direct association between low self-esteem and poor mental health.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Neff, Rude, and Kirkpatrick (2007) revealed significant positive correlations between self-compassion and self-reported measures of happiness, optimism, positive affect, wisdom, personal initiative, curiosity and exploration, agreeableness, extroversion, and conscientiousness. In addition, self-compassion has positive effects on relationship maintenance and satisfaction. Researchers have found that with the moderation of conscientiousness, more self-compassionate males, who are highly conscientious, pay more effort to correct their relational mistakes and they are more satisfied with their relationships. The same patterns were valid for women regardless of their conscientiousness level (Baker & McNulty, 2011).

As aforementioned, self-compassion is inversely associated with negative psychological constructs. The results of the meta-analysis including 20 studies revealed a strong negative association between self-

compassion and psychopathology indicators namely depression, anxiety and stress (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012). Similarly, in the study conducted by Pauley and McPherson (2010), participants reported that self-compassion is useful in dealing with depression and anxiety. Self-compassion was negatively correlated with negative affect (Neff et al., 2007), rumination (Neff, 2003a), fear of failure (Neff et al., 2005), neuroticism (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff et al., 2007), dysfunctional attitudes (Iskender, 2011), anxiety (Neff et al., 2005), personal fable (believing the uniqueness of own experiences) (Neff & McGehee, 2010), and vulnerable narcissism and aggression (Barry et al., 2015). It is also a negative predictor of eating disorder pathology (Kelly, Vimalakanthan & Carter, 2014), and it can be regarded as antidote of self-pity (Neff et al., 2005). In short, a growing body of literature yields that self-compassion has positive effects on physical and psychological functioning.

Self-compassion also provides valuable information within academic context, although it is not directly correlated with GPA (Neff et al., 2005). Self-compassion has a facilitative role in learning by precluding unfavorable effect of negative self-evaluation and providing more adaptive motivational pattern (Neff et al., 2005). Neff et al. (2005) revealed that self-compassion is positively correlated with mastery goal orientation in which students determine their own standards with the desire for learning and mastering a new material that they were curious about. Their study also yielded up a negative correlation between self-compassion and two types of performance goal orientations (performance approach and performance avoidant) in which students act according to standards designated by others with the purpose of preserving or augmenting self-worth. More specifically, the negative correlation is stronger for performance avoidant goal orientation (avoiding to perform more poorly than others with the fear of being labeled as

unintelligent or incompetent) than performance approach goal orientation (striving for outperforming others). In addition to these, their study also revealed that more self-compassionate students have higher perceived competence and less fear of failure.

Self-compassionate people handle failure situation with a more balanced perspective. Rather than denying their own responsibility, they accept their failure and related negative emotions with the awareness that these are parts of imperfect human nature. In this way, they are more able to see the failure as an opportunity for self-improvement and learning new things rather than seeing failure as an indicator of diminishing self-worth (Neff et al., 2005)

As aforementioned, according to self-compassion perspective, both the possibility of failure and the actual failure situation are not perceived as threats to ego and self-worth, but according to self-handicapping perspective, they are ego threats, which may result in a decrement of self-worth. Low self-compassionate people may try to preserve their self-image by avoiding situations when they perceive higher possibility of failure for not getting labeled as incompetent or they may augment their self-image by trying to proof their superiority with outperforming others (Neff et al., 2005). With the light of these knowledge, it was expected a negative association between self-compassion and self-handicapping. Unfortunately, very few studies investigated this association.

Petersen (2014) revealed that self-compassion was inversely related to self-handicapping and sandbagging, and it is a negative significant predictor for both types of self-protection strategies, and self-compassion explained 3% of the variance in self-handicapping. Moreover, a recent study conducted by Akin and Akin (2015) examined the role of self-compassion in predicting self-handicapping with a Turkish university

student sample. Their study result showed that 51% of the variance in self-handicapping was explained by self-compassion. Self-judgment, isolation and over-identification were found as positive predictors, whereas common humanity was found as a negative predictor of self-handicapping.

## **2.7. Summary of the Literature**

In a highly achievement oriented educational settings, identifying and removing obstacles to success is important for increasing students achievement. The literature was reviewed based on one of these obstacles, which is called self-handicapping in which students create or claimed impediment to their successful performance in order to protect their positive self-image. The reviewed literature started with the definition of the self-handicapping concept and continued with the antecedents and types of it. Although the types of self-handicapping were not used in the current study, behavioral self-handicapping and self-reported handicapping were explained and exemplified in order to understand the pre-existing researches. The review also involved the short term and long term consequences of self-handicapping on students' well-being and academic performances. Moreover, as important correlates of self-handicapping, gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test- anxiety and self-compassion were explained respectively. The whole reviewed literature helped the researcher justify the significance of the study and give direction to the methodology of the current study.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHOD**

This chapter presents information about the method of the study. The overall design of the study, research question, operational definitions of the predictor and outcome variables, participants of the study, six data collection instruments (Appendix A), data collection procedures, data analysis and limitations are explained.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

Correlational research design was used in the present study. In correlational research studies, the relationships among variables are examined without any attempt to influence them (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The purpose of the study was to examine the role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion in predicting college students' self-handicapping. Hierarchical Regression Analysis was conducted to evaluate how well gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predicted the variation in university students' self-handicapping.

#### **3.2. Research Question**

The following research question has been investigated in the present study.

How well do gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predict the variation in university students' self-handicapping?

### 3.3. Participants

All Turkish undergraduate students constituted the target population, whereas METU students constituted the accessible population of the current study. Participants were recruited by using convenience sampling method. 850 data collection instruments were administered in classes. However, 49 students who did not fill the scales properly were excluded and the study carried out with 801 undergraduate students. Demographic information of the participants was summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1  
*Demographic Information of the Participants of the Main Study*

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Gender				
Female	404	50.4		
Male	397	49.6		
Faculty				
Faculty of Engineering	372	46.4		
Faculty of Education	287	35.8		
Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences	78	9.7		
Faculty of Arts and Science	59	7.4		
Faculty of Architecture	4	0.5		
Grade				
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	201	31.3		
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	268	33.5		
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	135	16.9		
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	134	16.7		
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	6	0.7		
CGPA			2.75	0.62

Eight hundred and one voluntary undergraduate students from 38 different departments participated voluntarily in the study. Four hundred and four (50.4%) of the participants were female, 397 (49.6%) of them were male. Three hundred seventy two (46.4%) of them were from Faculty of Engineering; 287 (35.8%) of them were from Faculty of Education; 78 (9.7%) of them were from Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences; 59 (7.4%) of them were from Faculty of Arts and Science; 4 (0.5%) of them were from Faculty of Architecture, and 1 (0.1%) of them did not specify their faculties. Two hundred and one (31.3%) of them were 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 268 (33.5%) of them were 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 135 (16.9%) of them were 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 134 (16.7%) of them were 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and 6 (0.7%) of them were 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Participants' cumulative grade point average (GPA) ranged from 0.33 to 4.00 with a mean of 2.75 ( $SD = 0.62$ ).

### **3.4. Data Collection Instruments**

In this study, six data collection instruments were utilized. These were: Self-handicapping Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Tuckman Procrastination Scale, Anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire, Self-Compassion Scale, and demographic information form.

In order to test whether data collection instruments properly worked for university students, the pilot study was conducted. The instruments were administered to 450 METU students. However 57 students did not fill the data collection instruments properly and they were excluded. The pilot study was conducted with the data gathered from the remaining 393 volunteer participants who filled the scales properly. Demographic information of the pilot study participants was summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

*Demographic Information of the Participants of the Pilot Study*

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Gender				
Female	184	46.8		
Male	208	52.9		
Faculty				
Faculty of Arts and Science	132	33.6		
Faculty of Engineering	117	29.8		
Faculty of Education	63	16.0		
Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences	43	10.9		
Faculty of Architecture	12	3.1		
Grade				
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	93	23.7		
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	73	18.6		
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	123	31.3		
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	83	21.1		
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	11	2.8		
CGPA			2.68	0.52

A hundred and eighty four (46.8%) of the students were female and 208 (52.9%) of them were male. One (0.3%) student did not specify her/his gender. A hundred and thirty two (33.6%) of them were from of Arts and Science; 117 (29.8%) of them were from Faculty of Engineering; 63 (16%) of them were from Faculty of Education; 43 (10.9%) of them were from Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences; 12 (3.1%) of them were from Faculty of Architecture, and 26 (6.6%) of them did not specify their faculties. Ninety three (23.7%) of them were 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 73



(18.6%) of them were 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 123 (31.3%) of them were 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 83 (21.1) of them were 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and 11 (2.8%) of them were 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 10 (2.5%) of them did not specify their grades. Participants' cumulative grade point average (GPA) ranged from 1.20 to 4.00 with a mean of 2.68 ( $SD = 0.52$ ).

Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to test the factor structures of the scales used in the present research. These analyses were performed using Analysis of Moment Structures 18.0. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) which is a non-normed fit index, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were selected as evaluation criteria. The value of GFI, AGFI, CFI statistics can be in a range of 0.00 to 1.00, and values greater than .90 indicate a good model fit (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). In addition, the values of RMSEA in the range of 0.00 to 0.05 indicate a good fit, the values in the range of 0.05 to 0.08 indicate fair fit, and the values in the range of 0.08 and 0.10 indicate mediocre fit, and values greater than 0.10 indicate unacceptable fit (MacCallum, Widaman, Preacher, & Hong, 2001, p.621).

#### **3.4.1. Self-handicapping scale**

Self-Handicapping Scale (SHS), developed by Jones and Rhodewalt (1982), is a 25-item self-report measure. Items are in the form of statement and rated on a 6-point scale with anchor points labeled: Disagree very much (0), disagree pretty much (1), disagree a little (2), agree a little (3), agree pretty much (4), and agree very much (5). There were eight reverse coded items (item 3, 5, 6, 10, 13, 20, 22, and 23). SHS includes items such as *"When something important is coming up, like an exam or a job interview, I try to get as much sleep as possible the*

*night before.*”, “*I sometimes enjoy being mildly ill for a day or two because it takes off the pressure.*” Rhodewalt (1990) found internal consistency reliability coefficient as .79 and the test-retest reliability coefficient as .74 for the scale. Akin (2012) adapted the scale into Turkish and found that all items were loaded on a single factor. The internal consistency reliability coefficient of the scale was found as .90 and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found as .94 for the Turkish version of the scale (Akin; 2012).

Single factor structure was proposed for Self-Handicapping scale by researchers. Confirmatory Factor analysis was conducted to test how well the single factor model fit the data gathered from the sample of the current study. The first run of CFA for the Self-Handicapping Scale resulted in an inadequate model fit ( $\chi^2$  (393, 275) = 1091.50, GFI = .78, AGFI = .74, TLI = .37, CFI = .42, and RMSEA = .09). Hence, in order to improve the model, the modification indices (i.e., error covariance) of errors were checked and highest values were detected (Arbuckle, 1999). It was found that the pairs with high error covariances were  $\epsilon_5 - \epsilon_6$ ,  $\epsilon_3 - \epsilon_6$ ,  $\epsilon_2 - \epsilon_3$ ,  $\epsilon_3 - \epsilon_5$ ,  $\epsilon_2 - \epsilon_6$ . The items of these pairs were checked in terms of similarity of the contexts. Then, analysis was run again after connecting the related error pairs in the model. Second model resulted an acceptable fit for the single factor model ( $\chi^2$  (393, 270) = 798.86, GFI = .85, AGFI = .82, TLI = .59, CFI = .93, and RMSEA = .07). In the current study, reliability estimates for the scale was calculated by using Cronbach’s alpha and it was found as .74.

### **3.4.2. Rosenberg self-esteem scale**

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) was developed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure global self-esteem. It is a unidimensional, 10-item

self-report measure. Items, which are in the form of statement, are rated on a Guttman-type scale with 4 anchor points labeled: Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), strongly agree (4). RSES includes items such as *“I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.”*, *“I certainly feel useless at times.”* The scale includes five positive and five negative items. Reversed items are 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10. Two-week test-retest reliability coefficients of the RSES were found as  $r = .85$  and  $.88$  (Rosenberg, 1979; as cited in Chubb, Fertman & Ross, 1997, p. 120). Turkish adaptation of the scale was done by Çuhadaroglu (1985). The correlation between psychiatric interview scores and RSES scores was found as  $.71$  (Çuhadaroglu, 1985).

Single factor structure was proposed for original and Turkish version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale by the researchers (Rosenberg, 1965; Çuhadaroglu, 1985). CFA was conducted to test how well the single factor model for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale would fit the data. The first run of CFA for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale resulted in an inadequate model fit ( $\chi^2 (393, 35) = 323.682$ , GFI =  $.85$ , AGFI =  $.76$ , TLI =  $.80$ , CFI =  $.84$ , and RMSEA =  $.15$ ). Hence, in order to improve the model, the modification indices (i.e., error covariance) of errors were checked and highest values were detected (Arbuckle, 1999). It was found that the pairs with high error covariances were  $\epsilon_9 - \epsilon_{10}$ ,  $\epsilon_6 - \epsilon_7$ ,  $\epsilon_8 - \epsilon_9$ ,  $\epsilon_1 - \epsilon_2$ . The items of these pairs were checked in terms of similarity of the contexts. Then, analysis was run again after connecting the related error pairs in the model. The second model resulted in a fair fit for the single factor model ( $\chi^2 (393, 31) = 85.92$ , GFI =  $.96$ , AGFI =  $.92$ , TLI =  $.96$ , CFI =  $.97$ , and RMSEA =  $.07$ ). In order to test the reliability of the RSES, Cronbach's alpha was calculated and found as  $.89$ .

### 3.4.3. Tuckman procrastination scale

Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS) was developed by Tuckman in 1991 to determine the procrastination tendency of college students. The single-factor instrument includes 16-items which are rated on a 4 point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). TPS includes items such as “*I postpone starting in on things I don’t like to do*”; “*When I have a deadline, I wait till the last minute.*” In the original study Tuckman (1991) found the Cronbach’s alpha as .86. In a more recent study it was found as .91 (Tuckman, 2007).

Turkish translation and adaptation of Tuckman Procrastination Scale was conducted by (Uzun-Özer, Saçkes, & Tuckman, 2013). Since two items were removed from the scale in the adaptation study, Turkish version of the TPS includes 14 items. In addition, Uzun-Özer, (2010) added a middle “unsure” response to the rating scale in order to increase the variability of scores and reliability estimates. New rating scale has 5 anchor points labeled: Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), unsure (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5). There were four reverse coded items (item 7, 10, 12, and 14). The Cronbach’s alpha for the Turkish version was found to be .90 (Uzun-Özer et al., 2013).

Single factor structure was proposed for original and Turkish version of the Tuckman Procrastination Scale by the researchers (Tuckman, 1991; Uzun-Özer et al., 2013). CFA was conducted to test how well the single factor model for Tuckman Procrastination Scale would fit the data. The first run of CFA for Tuckman Procrastination Scale resulted in an inadequate model fit ( $\chi^2$  (393, 77) = 354.83, GFI = .88, AGFI = .83, TLI = .87, CFI = .89, and RMSEA = .10). Hence, in order to improve the model, the modification indices (i.e., error covariance) of errors were checked and highest values were detected (Arbuckle, 1999). It was found that the

pairs with high error covariances were  $\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_3$ ,  $\varepsilon_{11} - \varepsilon_{13}$ ,  $\varepsilon_6 - \varepsilon_8$ ,  $\varepsilon_{12} - \varepsilon_{14}$ . The items of these pairs were checked in terms of similarity of the contexts. Then, a further analysis was run after connecting the related error pairs in the model. The second model resulted in a fair fit for the single factor model ( $\chi^2 (393, 73) = 216.19$ , GFI = .93, AGFI = .90, TLI = .93, CFI = .94, and RMSEA = .07). In addition, Cronbach's alpha was found as .93 as a reliability coefficient of the scale.

#### **3.4.4. Anxiety subscale of academic emotions questionnaire**

Academic Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) was developed by Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, and Perry (2002). In this study, only anxiety subscale was used. The anxiety subscale of AEQ consists of 8 items. Items are in the form of statement and rated on a 5-point scale with anchor points labeled: Almost never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3), usually (4), and almost always (5). The subscale includes items such as "*When taking tests, I get so nervous I wish I could skip this test*", "*I felt sick to my stomach when taking tests*". There is no reverse item in the scale. Cronbach's alpha reliability value of this subscale was found to be .92 (Pekrun et al., 2002). Anxiety dimension of Academic Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) was adapted to Turkish by Çapa-Aydın and Emmioğlu (2008). The reliability estimate was reported as .87 for anxiety dimension for the Turkish version.

CFA was conducted to test how well the single factor model for the anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire would fit the data. The first run of CFA for the anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire resulted in an inadequate model fit ( $\chi^2 (393, 14) = 229.07$ , GFI = .84, AGFI = .68, TLI = .72, CFI = .82, and RMSEA = .20). Hence, in order to improve the model, the modification indices (i.e., error covariance) of errors were checked and highest values were detected (Arbuckle, 1999). It was found that the pairs with high error covariances

were  $\varepsilon_6 - \varepsilon_7$ ,  $\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_2$ ,  $\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_7$ ,  $\varepsilon_2 - \varepsilon_6$ ,  $\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_6$ . The items of these pairs were checked in terms of similarity of the contexts. Then, analysis was run again after connecting the related error pairs in the model. The second model resulted in a mediocre fit for the single factor model ( $\chi^2$  (393, 9) = 48.02, GFI = .97, AGFI = .90, TLI = .92, CFI = .97, and RMSEA = .10). In addition, Cronbach's alpha was calculated as .85 as a reliability coefficient of the scale.

### **3.4.5. The self-compassion scale**

The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) was developed to measure self-compassion by Neff (2003a). SCS is 26-item self-report measure. Items are in the form of statement (i.e. "*When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through*", and "*When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need*") and statements are rated on a 5-point scale with anchor points labeled: Almost never (1), occasionally (2), about half of the time (3), fairly often (4), almost always (5). There were eleven reverse coded items (item 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, and 23). SCS has six subscales, which are self-kindness, self-judgment, and awareness of common humanity, isolation, mindfulness and over-identification. For the overall scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .92, and for the subscales Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .78, .77, .80, .79, .75, .81 respectively. Test-retest reliability coefficient for the overall scale was .93, and for the subscales .88, .88, .80, .85, .85, .88, respectively (Neff, 2003a). SCS was adapted to Turkish by Deniz, Kesici, and Sümer (2008). In the Turkish version, items were loaded on a single factor. Since the two items, which have item total correlation less than .30, removed, Turkish version includes 24 items. Internal consistency coefficient and the test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale were found as .89 and .83 respectively for the Turkish version (Deniz et al., 2008).

Neff (2003a) proposed six factor structures namely self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification for the original version of the Self-Compassion scale. However, for the Turkish version, Deniz, Kesici and Sümer (2008) proposed a single factor structure. CFA was conducted on 24 items to test the single factor structure of the Self-Compassion Scale.

The first run of CFA for the Self-Compassion Scale resulted in an inadequate model fit ( $\chi^2$  (393, 252) = 1479.89, GFI = .67, AGFI = .61, TLI = .61, CFI = .64, and RMSEA = .11). Hence, in order to improve the model, the modification indices (i.e., error covariance) of errors were checked and highest values were detected (Arbuckle, 1999). It was found that the pairs with high error covariances were  $\epsilon_{19} - \epsilon_{21}$ ,  $\epsilon_6 - \epsilon_9$ ,  $\epsilon_{17} - \epsilon_{23}$ ,  $\epsilon_{12} - \epsilon_{17}$ ,  $\epsilon_{12} - \epsilon_{23}$ ,  $\epsilon_{21} - \epsilon_{24}$ ,  $\epsilon_4 - \epsilon_{11}$ ,  $\epsilon_2 - \epsilon_6$ ,  $\epsilon_{12} - \epsilon_{24}$ . The items of these pairs were checked in terms of similarity of the contexts. Then, analysis was run again after connecting the related error pairs in the model. The second model resulted in a mediocre fit for the single factor model ( $\chi^2$  (393, 243) = 880.27, GFI = .80, AGFI = .75, TLI = .79, CFI = .82, and RMSEA = .08). Moreover, Cronbach's alpha was found as .91 as a reliability coefficient of the scale in the current study.

#### **3.4.6. Demographic information form**

Demographic information form includes questions about gender, department, grade level, and CGPA.

### **3.5. Data Collection Procedures**

In order to meet the ethical standards in conducting research, necessary forms for the Ethics Committee of the Middle East Technical University

were prepared. The committee members examined the study and confirmed that this study met ethical standards. After taking the approval of the ethics committee, the researcher took permission from the faculty members in order to collect data during class hours. Researcher created a weekly plan for data collection. Data were gathered in three weeks by researcher. The participation to the study was based on willingness of the students. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and the emphasized the anonymity in order to increase the comfort level of participants in answering the question. Then, informed consents were distributed to volunteer participants. After gathering informed consents, data collection instruments were administered during regular class hours. The administration took about 10-15 minutes.

### **3.6. Description of Variables**

In this section, predictor variables (gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion) and the outcome variable (self-handicapping) are explained.

#### **3.6.1. Predictor variables**

**Gender:** A categorical variable with categories of (1) female and (2) male.

**Self-Esteem:** The mean scores as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

**Procrastination:** The mean scores as measured by the Tuckman Procrastination Scale.

**Test Anxiety:** The mean scores as measured by the Anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire.

**Self-Compassion:** The mean scores as measured by Self-Compassion Scale



### **3.6.2. Dependent variable**

**Self-Handicapping:** The mean scores as measured by Self-Handicapping Scale

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

Prior to analyses of pilot and major data, erroneous entries and missing values were checked. Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted for Self-Handicapping Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Tuckman Procrastination Scale, Anxiety subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire, and Self-Compassion Scale and results of each CFA was reported under the heading of each scale in the method section. These analyses were performed using Analysis of Moment Structures 4.0 (AMOS; Arbuckle, 1999). The goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) which is a non-normed fit index, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were selected as evaluation criteria. The value of GFI, AGFI, CFI statistics can be in a range of 0.00 to 1.00, and values greater than .90 indicate a good model fit (MacCallum et al., 1996). In addition, the values of RMSEA in the range of 0.00 to 0.05 indicate a good fit, the values in the range of 0.05 to 0.08 indicate fair fit, and the values in the range of 0.08 and 0.10 indicate mediocre fit, and values greater than 0.10 indicate unacceptable fit (MacCallum et al., 2001, p.621). In addition, reliability estimates for the scales were calculated by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is regarded as acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Hierarchical Regression Analysis was conducted to evaluate how well gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predicted the variation in university students' self-handicapping by using

IBM SPSS 22. Prior to the analysis of data, assumptions for the multiple regression analysis as stated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) (sample size, normally distributed errors, homoscedasticity, independent errors, linearity, multicollinearity, influential observations) were checked and all the assumptions were met.

While conducting hierarchical regression analysis, researchers preferred to use mean scores rather than total scores of the scales due to the concerns about the missing data, although the current study had less than 5% of missing data. If there were no missing data, conducting analysis with mean score or total score would not create any significant difference. However, when there are missing data in the calculation of total score, the value of missing data are taken as zero and the total score is affected. Although the mean score has restricted variability range, it is not affected from the missing data. The significance level was determined as .05.

In the hierarchical regression analysis, variables were entered to the model according to their significance emphasized in the literature. Due to the fact that researches pointed out a salient gender difference in people's self-handicapping tendencies (Brown & Kimble, 2009; Hirt & McCrea, 2009), in the first step, gender was entered to the model. In the second step, self-esteem, which is considered as the central factor in describing self-handicapping (Harris & Snyder, 1986; Warner & Moore, 2004), was added to the model. In the third step, procrastination that share common elements with self-handicapping (Beck et al., 2000; Ferrari & Tice, 2000; Lay et al., 1992), was entered. In the fourth step, test anxiety, which is considered as a significant correlates (Smith et al., 1982), was added to the model. In the last step, self-compassion, which is relatively new and less investigated but a considerable contributor to self-handicapping, was added to the model (Akin & Akin, 2015; Petersen, 2014).

Based on the literature, this study proposed a model in order to explain the self-handicapping concept. In this model self-handicapping (Y) was predicted by gender ( $X_1$ ), self-esteem ( $X_2$ ), procrastination ( $X_3$ ), test anxiety ( $X_4$ ) and self-compassion ( $X_5$ ). The formulation of the model was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + e$$

### **3.8. Limitations of the Study**

There were some limitations of this study. The first limitation was sample selection procedure. In this study, participants were selected by using convenience sampling. Random sampling, which is required for generalizability of the result, cannot be achieved because university administration limits the accessibility of students' IDs and e-mails. The second limitation of the present study was the type of the measurement. In this study self-report measures were utilized. However, collecting data from participants' instructors and peers would have provided supplementary data for students' self-handicapping. The third limitation was using the adapted version of the Self-Handicapping Scale. Although confirmatory factor analysis of the scale produced an acceptable fit and an acceptable reliability coefficient, they were not in the range of good fit and high reliability. The fourth limitation was cross-sectional survey design. In this study, data were collected at one point in time. In certain times, such as just before the exams, students may have higher inclination to self-handicapping, procrastination and test anxiety. Therefore, the data collection time might affect the students' responses. In this regard, longitudinal studies may reveal more comprehensive information related to the motivation of students. The fifth and final limitation of the study was social desirability bias. Although the data were collected based on the anonymity rules, social desirability bias might have affected the participants' actual responses.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

In this chapter, the results of the study are presented in six sections. The first section includes preliminary analysis. The second section presents descriptive statistics of the major study variables. The third section gives information about the correlations among variables. The fourth section explains assumption checks for statistical analyses. The last section presents the results of the main analysis.

#### **4.1. Preliminary Analysis**

Prior to the analyses of pilot and main study, data were controlled in order to find out erroneous entries. Minimum and maximum values, frequencies of study variables were checked and entries, which were not in the range of possible values, were corrected. Missing values were computed and it was found that missing values were less than 5%. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) proposed that 5% or less missing values did not lead serious errors and yielded similar results. For this reason, missing value analysis was not run in the present study.

#### **4.2. Descriptive Statistics for the Major Study Variables**

In order to describe the outcome variable (self-handicapping) and predictor variables (self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety and self-compassion), mean, standard deviation, min and max scores of each variable were summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Statistics for the Major Study Variables*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Self-handicapping	2.19	0.50	0	5
Self-esteem	3.10	0.55	1	4
Procrastination	3.04	0.82	1	5
Test anxiety	2.20	0.75	1	5
Self-compassion	3.12	0.62	1	5

The mean score of self-handicapping was 2.19 with a standard deviation of 0.50. The mean score of self-esteem was 3.10 with a standard deviation of 0.55. The mean score of the procrastination was 3.04 with a standard deviation of 0.82. The mean score of test anxiety was 2.2 with a standard deviation of 0.75. The mean score of self-compassion was 3.12 with a standard deviation of 0.62.

**4.3. Correlation Matrix of the Major Study Variables**

Table 4.2 summarized the intercorrelation of major study variables by using Pearson correlation coefficient. All correlations were significant. The highest correlation coefficient ( $r = .63$ ) was found between self-handicapping and procrastination; the lowest correlation coefficient ( $r = .22$ ) was found between test anxiety and procrastination.

Table 4.2

*Correlation Matrix of the Major Study Variables*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Self-handicapping	1.00				
Self-esteem	-.55*	1.00			
Procrastination	.63*	-.36*	1.00		
Test anxiety	.49*	-.42*	.22*	1.00	
Self-compassion	-.55*	.62*	-.36*	-.42*	1.00

\* $p < .05$ **4.4. Assumption Checks for the Statistical Analyses**

Before the analysis, assumptions for the multiple regression analysis, sample size, normally distributed errors, homoscedasticity, independent errors, linearity, multicollinearity, influential observations, were checked (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The rule of thumb proposed by Green (1991) stated that sample size should be as:  $N \geq 50 + 8m$  (where  $m$  is the number of predictors). According to this criterion, the sample size of the study was adequate ( $801 \geq 50 + 48$ ). The normally distributed errors were checked by histogram and p-p plot of residuals. The results indicated that errors were normally distributed. Figure 4.1 represents a belly-shaped, normal distribution of errors and Figure 4.2 represents that there was no deviation from the straight line.

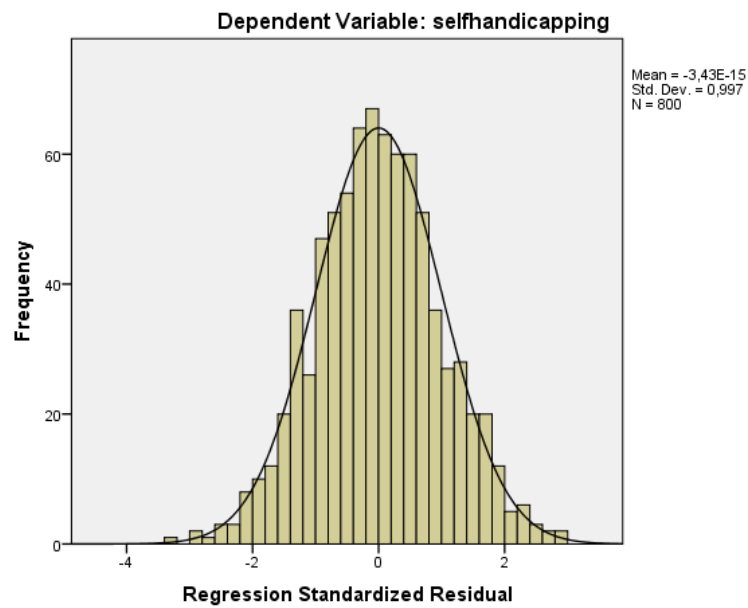


Figure 4.1. Histogram for self-handicapping

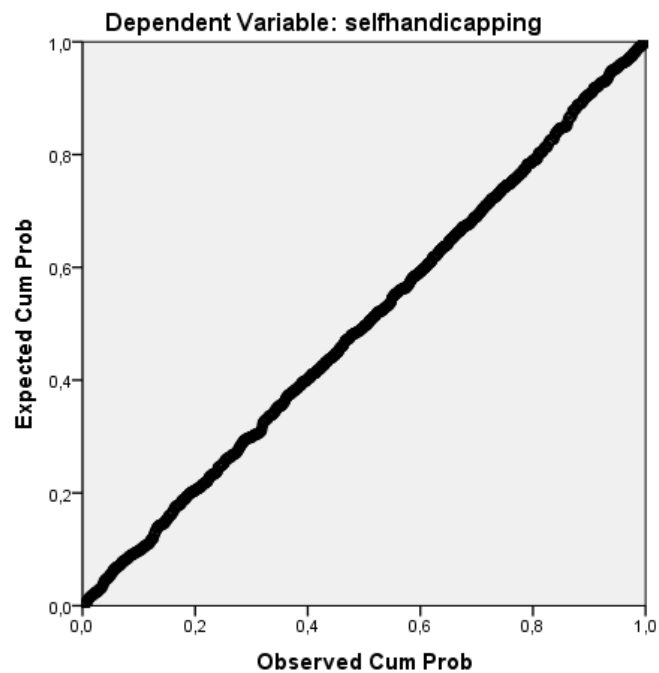
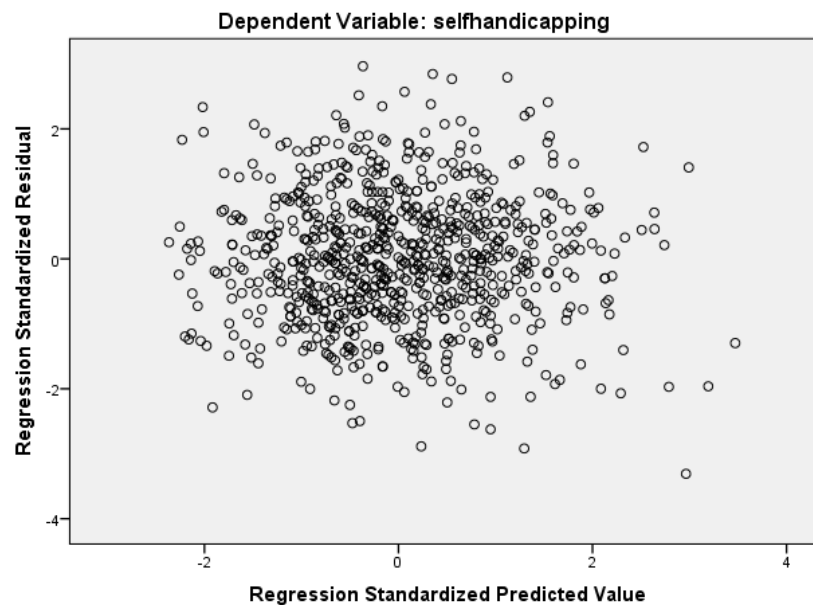


Figure 4.2. P-P plot for self-handicapping

Homoscedasticity assumption accepts that the independent variables' standard deviations of errors equal for all scores of dependent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Homoscedasticity assumption can be checked by scatter plot and a random array of dots evenly scattered around zero in the scatterplot is required for homoscedasticity (Field, 2009). The scatterplot did not display a very clear pattern and dots scattered evenly as shown in Figure 4.3, so this assumption was met.



*Figure 4.3.* Scatter plot for self-handicapping

Independent error assumption implies that the residuals do not follow a pattern from case to case and the residuals should be uncorrelated. This assumption was checked by Durbin-Watson value that should be between 1 and 3 (Field, 2009). The Durbin-Watson value was found as 2.0; therefore, the independence of residuals assumption was met.

Multicollinearity was checked by variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance, which reveal whether a strong relationship exists between



predictor variables (Field, 2009). All of the VIF values were smaller than 4, and tolerance values were more than 0.20 as shown in Table 4.3; thus, there was no multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 4.3

*Tolerance and VIF Values of Predictor Variables for Multicollinearity*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Gender	.95	1.06
Self-esteem	.57	1.75
Procrastination	.83	1.20
Test anxiety	.76	1.32
Self-compassion	.56	1.74

Influential observation assumption was checked by Cook's distance test, which measure the overall influence of a case on the model (Field, 2009). All Cook's values were less than 1, so no outlier was detected (Cook & Weisberg, 1982).

Each participant filled in the scales on their own during regular class hours and the data were delivered to the researcher by the volunteer participants from each class upon the completion of the scales. Therefore, it was assumed that independent observation assumption was not violated.

#### **4.5. Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

Hierarchical Regression Analysis was conducted to evaluate how well gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predicted college students' self-handicapping. Table 4.4 summarized the findings of hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.4

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Self-Handicapping*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	$sr^2$	$R^2$	$\Delta F$
Model 1						.01	5.16
Gender	-.08	.04	-.08	-2.27	.01		
Model 2						.30	340.56
Self-esteem	-.50	.03	-.55	-18.45	.30		
Model 3						.22	360.55
Procrastination	.31	.02	.50	18.99	.22		
Model 4						.06	107.77
Test anxiety	.18	.02	.27	10.38	.06		
Model 5						.02	33.24
Self-compassion	-.14	.02	-.17	-5.77	.02		

\* $p < .05$

In the first step, gender was entered into the model. The results indicated that the model is significant and gender explained the 1 % variance in self-handicapping,  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 798) = 5.16$ ,  $p < .05$ . In the second block, self-esteem was entered as predictor. Addition of the predictor resulted in a significant increase in the explained variance. The second model was also significant and explained the 30% variance in self-handicapping,  $\Delta R^2 = .30$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 797) = 340.56$ ,  $p < .05$ . In the third block, procrastination was added and resulted in a significant model with 22% increase in explained variance,  $\Delta R^2 = .22$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 796) = 360.55$ ,  $p < .05$ . In the fourth block, test anxiety was entered and resulted in a significant model in which test anxiety explained 6% of the variance,  $\Delta R^2 = .06$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 795) = 107.77$ ,  $p < .05$ . In the last block, self-compassion is entered and resulted in a significant model, and explained 2% of the variance in

self-handicapping,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 794) = 33.24$ ,  $p < .05$ . The model clearly indicated that all of the predictor variables contributed to self-handicapping significantly. The overall model explained the 61% of the variance in self-handicapping whereas semi-partial variance of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion were 1%, 30%, 22%, 6%, and %2 respectively.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **5.1. Discussion of the Findings**

This study aimed to examine how well gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion predict the variation in university students' self-handicapping. The results indicated that all of the predictor variables significantly contribute to explaining self-handicapping and explained 61 % of the variance for the variation in university students' self-handicapping. Semi-partial variance of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion were found as 1%, 30%, 22%, 6%, and 2%, respectively. The directions and predictor power of each variable were discussed in the following sections.

##### **5.1.1. Gender and self-handicapping**

According to the finding of this study, gender was found a significant predictor that explained 1% of the variance in trait self-handicapping. To be more specific, the female students' self-handicapping tendency was higher than the male students.

The finding of this study should be heedfully compared to other studies because the majority of the studies which examined gender differences in relation to self-handicapping focused on the behavioral self-handicapping type and they revealed an apparent male dominance (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Hirt et al., 1991; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986). Female students generally do not prefer to engage in behavioral self-handicapping

(Baumeister et al., 1985; Berglas & Jones, 1978; Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble & Hirt, 2005) or their behavioral self-handicapping tendency is lower than the males (Brown et al., 2012).

Different from the behavioral self-handicapping, studies of gender in relation to the trait self-handicapping do not yield consistent findings. The finding of this study is parallel with the studies that revealed females have higher trait self-handicapping when compared to males (Elliot & Church, 2003; Warner & Moore, 2004), whereas it is contradictory with the studies that found gender as an insignificant predictor (Martin & Brawley, 2002; Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005).

At first glance, the finding of this study seems interesting because the reality of females' not generally engaging in behavioral self-handicapping may create an expectation of low level of trait self-handicapping. This contradiction may originate from the types of behavior that was chosen as a self-handicapping strategy. Although behavioral self-handicapping was operationalized by engaging in a single behavior, trait self-handicapping includes several behaviors, emotions, thoughts, and features. Choosing performance inhibiting options (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Brown et al., 2012; Brown & Kimble, 2009) in front of others, consuming alcohol (Tucker et al., 1981), reduction of effort (Baumeister et al., 1985; Harris & Snyder, 1986; Hirt et al., 1991; Hirt et al., 2000; Kimble et al., 1998; Kimble & Hirt, 2005) may be too risky behaviors, which decrease their performance for females. Females are less likely to take risks than males (Byrnes & Miller, 1999). In addition, females give more value to effort than males and they do not prefer reduction of effort as a self-handicapping strategy (McCrea et al., 2008). In short, women do not engage in certain types of behavior as a self-handicapping strategy but still they may have higher inclination to create or claim impediment to successful performance to protect their self-concepts.

One of the possible explanations for females' greater tendency to trait self-handicapping is related with how they evaluate themselves. According to "looking-glass self" concept, self-evaluation depends on how others see themselves. Women have greater concerns and sensitivity to others' evaluations. They are more vulnerable to interpersonal threats (Simmons & Rosenberg, 1975), and they have lower self-confidence when compared to men (Lirgg, 1991). In this regard, females' failure expectation may be higher and negative implication of failure feedback made by others may contribute to their self-concept negatively. In order to protect their self-worth, they may need to be more resilient to these negative evaluations by having higher inclination to self-handicapping.

#### **5.1.2. Self-esteem and self-handicapping**

Self-esteem was found as a significant negative predictor, which contributed to the greatest portion of variance (30%) in self-handicapping. In this study, it was found that self-handicapping increased with decreasing self-esteem level. In contrast to some study findings that revealed that people with high self-esteem self-handicapped more (e.g., Tice & Baumeister, 1990), several studies support the finding of this study, which showed that people with low self-esteem have a higher tendency to self-handicap (e.g., Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997; Prapavessis & Grove, 1998; Rhodewalt, 1990, Warner & Moore, 2004).

Several reasons might induce the negative association between self-handicapping and self-esteem. To begin with, it can be best understood with the self-esteem protection motive of both self-handicapper and people with low esteem. People with high self-esteem may interchangeably use their positive assets, when their self-worth is exposed to a threat. Yet, people with low self-esteem do not have a rich

repertoire of positive views regarding their self-concept; hence, the limited resources make them more fragile and more defensive when they face a possible threat to their self-worth (Spencer, Josephs, & Steele, 1993). They hate to face situations that diminish their self-esteem, which has been already low (Baumeister, 1993).

People with low self-esteem suffer more and pay higher costs in failure situations and therefore their primary concern is protecting themselves from the negative consequences of failure (Tice, 1993). Their tendencies to use self-protection strategies increase; thus, they may possibly use more self-handicapping by providing external causes to cover up the shortage of their own resources and fragility. Moreover, self-esteem has an anxiety buffering function (Greenberg et al., 1992). When there is an anticipated threat, anxiety increases; people with high self-esteem deal with anxiety more successfully. People with low self-esteem may incline to use strategies that protect and fix their self-esteem (i.e. self-handicapping) due to inability to decrease their anxiety.

The higher tendency of low self-esteemed students to engage in self-handicapping strategies may also be explained with uncertainty about their competences and abilities. People, who believe that they are capable of overcoming difficulties and reaching attained goal, do not engage in self-handicapping strategies; however, people who do not have enough confidence to handle compelling conditions or to complete a performance with success need more attributional advantage of self-handicapping (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Warner & Moore, 2004). People with low self-esteem have less self-knowledge, experience more self-concept confusion, and their self-knowledge is more fluctuating, uncertain, and unstable when compared to people with high self-esteem (Baumeister, 1993; Campbell & Lavellee, 1993). Therefore, people with low self-esteem have higher inclination to self-handicapping in order to

provide a ready explanation for failure whose possibility is increased with uncertain abilities.

### **5.1.3. Procrastination and self-handicapping**

The results indicated that procrastination is a significant positive predictor of self-handicapping. After self-esteem, procrastination contributed to the largest portion of variance (22%) in self-handicapping. Self-handicapping increased with increased procrastination. The results of the current study corroborate the findings of previous research which pointed out a positive association between procrastination and self-handicapping (Beck et al., 2000; Ferrari, 1991; Ferrari & Tice, 2000).

Ferrari and Tice (2000) stated that procrastination can be regarded as behavioral self-handicapping strategy because procrastination is creation of time limit before a task that should be completed. Students who procrastinate create an impediment to their successful completion of the task. Studies that examined procrastination from the self-handicapping perspective revealed a similar conclusion that procrastination is used as a self-handicapping strategy and they are overlapping constructs to some extent (Beck et al., 2000; Ferrari, 1991; Lay et al., 1992). Although procrastination provide an example for created impediments for self-handicapping, self-handicapping is more comprehensive because it includes many other created or claimed barriers such as making different kinds of performance-debilitating choice (Berglas & Jones, 1978; Brown & Kimble, 2009; Gibbons & Gaeddert, 1984; Higgins & Harris, 1988; Jones & Berglas, 1978; Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt & Davison, 1986; Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Shepperd & Arkin, 1989b; Tice, 1991; Tucker et al., 1981; Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005), setting unreachable performance goals (Greenberg, 1985), reporting anxiety, unfavorable



conditions, hypochondriasis and etc. (Greenberg et al., 1984; Rhodewalt et al., 1984; Smith et al., 1983).

The positive association between these two constructs is explained by common reasons and motives behind them. Students procrastinate in order to deal with fear of failure, concerns about not fulfilling others' and own expectations, lack of self-confidence (Brownlow & Reasinger, 2000; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). In addition, a real or anticipated threat to self-esteem is another reason for procrastination (Lay et al., 1992). People are also motivated to engage in self-handicapping in the presence of anticipated evaluative threat that brings the risk of a decrease in self-esteem (Martin et al., 2003; Hirt et al., 1991). All of these reasons can be combined under the heading of protection and enhancement of self-worth, which is the primary motive of self-handicapping.

#### **5.1.4. Test anxiety and self-handicapping**

Similar to procrastination, test anxiety was found as a significant positive predictor, but its predictor power, which was found to be 6%, is quite lower than procrastination. Self-handicapping increases with increased test anxiety. The finding of this study is supported by other studies that showed the direct relationship between self-handicapping and test anxiety (Lay et al., 1992; Thomas & Gadbois, 2007).

The usage of test anxiety as a self-handicapping strategy is tested by Smith, Snyder, and Handelsman (1982), and they found that when test anxiety is perceived as an acceptable explanation, students use its self-protective function for making an alternative explanation for their failure. Test anxiety is a kind of self-reported handicapping which is based on claims rather than active creation of the impediment. When students fail,

s/he can explain the reason for her/his poor performance to be test anxiety rather than lack of intellect, ability or competence.

The common characteristics and goals that are shared by both test-anxious students and self-handicappers clarify the positive relationship between them. Firstly, test anxious students think about the possibility of poor performance and its negative implication and they compare themselves to others (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). Similarly, people are more inclined to self-handicapping, when there is a private expectation of failure but public expectation of success (Berglas & Jones, 1978). Secondly, test anxious student experience internal distractions and have self-doubt in evaluative situation (Sarason, 1984). In a similar vein, one of the antecedents of self-handicapping is uncertainty about their capabilities (Harris & Snyder, 1986; Warner & Moore, 2004). People who are certain about their self-concept do not need attributional benefit of self-handicapping (Berglas & Jones, 1978). Moreover, test anxious students have more negative and irrational thoughts (Wong, 2008), and these thoughts may foster their evaluation anxiety and lead them to anticipate a bigger threat to their self-concept which is one of the primary reason behind self-handicapping. All of the aforementioned similarities between test-anxious students and self-handicappers may result in a positive association between them.

#### **5.1.5. Self-compassion and self-handicapping**

Self-compassion, which is a relatively less investigated predictor, is also found to be a significant negative predictor that explained the small portion of the variance (2%) in self-handicapping. Self-handicapping decreases with increased self-compassion. This finding is parallel with the studies that disclose the negative predictor role of self-compassion in explaining self-handicapping (Akın & Akın, 2015; Petersen, 2014).

The association between self-handicapping and self-compassion may be understood by examining the different approaches to evaluation and implication of possible failures. According to self-handicapping perspective, people perceive an anticipated threat to their self-concept when they face a task that has diagnostic value about their competence, ability, or intelligence (Rhodewalt et al., 1991; Snyder & Smith, 1982), and they fear from failure. In addition, they have self-presentational concerns; they give importance to what others think about them (Kolditz & Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt et al., 1991). Due to the fact that they need to be viewed positively by themselves, they want to polish their self-worth or at least preserve it (Blaine & Crocker, 1993). In this regard self-enhancement and self-protection motives were triggered in evaluative situations (Rhodewalt et al., 1991). Rather than accepting the actual reasons for failure, which might be lack of competence, ability, or intelligence, they create or claim obstacles to their performance for attributing the reasons for their poor performance to these obstacles (Berglas, & Jones, 1978).

According to self-compassion perspective, others' performance evaluation or ideal standards are not taken into granted; self-evaluation is made by accepting both good and bad characteristics and possible or real failures are handled in a more balanced manner with the awareness of imperfect human nature. Self-compassionate people have higher perceived competence and less fear of failure (Neff et al., 2005). In other words, self-compassionate people do not have high self-presentational concerns or evaluation anxiety and they are less in need of self-protection or self-enhancement. Due to the fact that they do not need self-serving bias, they may be more capable of dealing with accurate knowledge about themselves. In this regard, they may be less in need of the attributional benefit of self-handicapping.

## **5.2. Implications of the Findings**

The findings of the present study have implications for students, counselors, educators and psychologists working at universities and secondary schools.

To begin with, the findings of the present study might be used to understand the barriers that were created or claimed by the students. Some students are aware of their tendency to generate excuses for their failure and some of them do not. This study provides information for both groups of students. They may gain awareness of their tendency to create or claim obstacles. In addition they also facilitate how other important factors such as gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion affect students self-handicapping tendencies.

Secondly, people use self-handicapping strategies for its short-term benefits, but it has detrimental effects on their well-being and academic outcomes (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005). This study provides information about its correlates, which may be beneficial to prevent this behaviour and its detrimental effects.

Thirdly, this study revealed that self-esteem is the most powerful contributor to self-handicapping. While dealing with self-handicapping, professionals should consider students' self-esteem. Helping students to increase their self-esteem might be beneficial to decrease their self-handicapping tendencies by improving their positive assets that they can be alternatively used in the the case of a threat to their self-concepts.

Fourthly, test anxiety and procrastination are prevalent problems among university students. Different approaches were used while helping students with these problems. Using self-handicapping perspective might

be beneficial to professionals while studying students who have these problems and high self-handicapping tendency.

Fifthly, the study found a slight significant gender difference. Although it is not a powerful difference, professionals should consider this slight gender difference while working with female and male self-handicappers.

### **5.3. Recommendations for Further Research**

Several recommendations are listed below for further studies.

- In order to increase the generalizability of the results this study can be replicated with different university student samples by using random sampling.
- Although confirmatory factor analysis for Self-handicapping Scale pointed out an acceptable fit for a single factor model in this sample, it is recommended to develop and validate a scale which has better fit indexes and which is more suitable for Turkish culture.
- Certain types of behaviors (withdrawal of effort, using alcohol, procrastination and etc.) and claims (reporting test anxiety, physical symptoms and etc.) were examined as kinds of self-handicapping strategies repeatedly; however, students have a larger repertoire of other kinds of self-handicapping. A survey study can be conducted to discover new types of self-handicapping strategies commonly used by students.
- Self-handicapping has not been adequately enquired in Turkish literature yet. It has been remained as an incomplete puzzle. In order to complete this puzzle, it is recommended to investigate the self-handicapping of students in different educational levels (primary, secondary, undergraduate, and graduate) with both empirical and field studies.

- The predictor role of gender, self-esteem, procrastination, test anxiety, and self-compassion in explaining self-handicapping were assessed with quantitative research methods; however, qualitative research methods may provide more comprehensive insight into the concept and may uncover more in-depth information regarding self-handicapping and its predictors, so it is recommended to extend this research with qualitative methods.
- Although there are numerous laboratory studies that examine gender differences in behavioral self-handicapping, gender differences in trait self-handicapping has not been elaborated yet. So, gender differences in trait self-handicapping may be scrutinized more with field studies.
- The predictor variables of this study explained more than half of the variance (%61) in self-handicapping; however, there is still an unexplained part. It would be helpful to investigate other predictor variables in explaining self-handicapping.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: SAMPLE ITEMS FROM INSTRUMENTS

#### Demographic Information Form

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu çalışmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinin kendini sabotajını yordayan değişkenleri (cinsiyet, öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı, ve öz-anlayış) incelemektir. Kişisel bilgileriniz kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır; kimliğinizi belirtecek bilgiler vermeniz istenmemektedir. Sizden istenen sorulara içten ve eksiksiz yanıtlar vermenizdir. Katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz.

1. Cinsiyetiniz: ☐ Kadın ☐ Erkek

2. Bölümünüz:

3. Sınıfınız: ☐ 1. Sınıf ☐ 2. Sınıf ☐ 3. Sınıf ☐ 4. Sınıf ☐ 5. sınıf

4. Genel Akademik Not Ortalamanız: .....

### Sample Items of Self-Handicapping Scale

Verilen ifadelerde sizin için en uygun seçeneğin karşısına çarpı (X) işareti koyunuz.	Hiç katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kısmen katılmıyorum	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Tamamen katılıyorum
2. İşlerimi son ana kadar ertelerim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Birçok insana göre daha keyifsizim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Bir derse veya önemli bir etkinliğe kayıt olmadan önce gerekli hazırlığı yaptığımdan emin olmaya çalışırım.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Okumaya çalışırken duyduğum sesler veya hayallerim kolaylıkla dikkatimi dağıtır.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Potansiyelimle takdir görmek yerine iyi yaptığım işlerle saygı görmeyi tercih ederim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. Şu andaki küçük zevkleri gelecekteki büyük zevklere tercih ederim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. Belki bir gün kendimi tamamen toparlayabilirim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Duygularım engel olmasaydı, daha iyi şeyler yapabilirdim.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Kabul ediyorum ki, diğerlerinin beklentisini karşılayamadığımda bu sonucu mantıklı hale getirmeye çalışırım.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Mantıklı düşünmemi ve doğru şeyler yapmamı engelleyecek herhangi bir uyuşturucu veya ilaç almayı tercih etmem.	0	1	2	3	4	5

### Sample Items of Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Lütfen her bir maddeyi dikkatlice okuyarak, sizin için doğruluk derecesini verilen 4'lü derecelendirme ölçeğini kullanarak yanıtlayınız.	Çok yanlış	Yanlış	Doğru	Çok doğru
1. Kendimi en az diğer insanlar kadar değerli buluyorum.	1	2	3	4
3. Genelde kendimi başarısız bir kişi olarak görme eğilimindeyim.	1	2	3	4
5. Kendimde gurur duyacak fazla bir şey bulamıyorum.	1	2	3	4
7. Genel olarak kendimden memnunum.	1	2	3	4
9. Bazen kesinlikle kendimin bir işe yaramadığımı düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4

### Sample Items of Tuckman Procrastination Scale

Lütfen, her bir ifadeyi okuduktan sonra, ifadelerin sizi ne kadar tanımladığını aşağıdaki 5'li derecelendirme ölçeğini kullanarak belirtiniz.	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
2. Yapmaktan hoşlanmadığım şeylere başlamayı ertelerim.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Çalışma alışkanlıklarımı geliştirmeyi ertelerim.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Ben iflah olmaz bir zaman savurganıyım.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ben bir zaman savurganıyım ve bunu düzeltmek için hiç bir çaba gösteremiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Bir eylem planı yaptığımda, onu takip ederim.	1	2	3	4	5

12. Önemli işleri her zaman vaktinden önce tamamlarım.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Bugünün işini yarına bırakmak benim tarzım değildir.	1	2	3	4	5

### Sample Items of Anxiety Subscale of Academic Emotions Questionnaire

Lütfen, her bir ifadeyi okuduktan sonra, ifadelerin sizi ne kadar tanımladığını 5'li derecelendirme ölçeğini kullanarak belirtiniz.	Hiçbir zaman	Nadiren	Bazen	Çoğu zaman	Her zaman
2. Sınav sırasında o kadar gergin olurum ki sınavı atlatmış olmayı dilerim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sınav sırasında o kadar gerilirim ki herşeyi unuturum.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Sınav sırasında mideme kramplar girer.	1	2	3	4	5

### Sample Items of Self-Compassion Scale

Lütfen her bir maddeyi ne kadar sıklıkla yaptığınızı verilen 5'li derecelendirme ölçeğini kullanarak yanıtlayınız.	Hiçbir zaman	Nadiren	Bazen	Çoğu zaman	Her zaman
1. Kendimi kötü hissettiğimde, kötü olan her şeye takılma eğilimim vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Yetersizliklerimi düşünmek kendimi daha yalnız ve dünyadan kopuk hissetmeme neden olur.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Benim için önemli bir şeyde başarısız olduğumda,	1	2	3	4	5

yetersizlik hisleriyle tükenirim.					
7. Zor zamanlar geçirdiğimde kendime daha katı (acımasız) olma eğilimindeyim.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Kendimi bir şekilde yetersiz hissettiğimde kendi kendime birçok insanın aynı şekilde kendi hakkında yetersizlik duyguları yaşadığını hatırlatmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Çok sıkıntılıysam, kendime ihtiyacım olan ilgi ve şefkati gösteririm	1	2	3	4	5
13. Acı veren bir şey olduğunda, durumu dengeli bir bakış açısıyla görmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Sevmediğim yanlarımı gördüğümde kendi kendimi üzerim.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Ben mücadele halindeyken diğer herkesin işlerinin benimkinden kolay gittiğini hissetme eğilimim vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Bir şey beni üzdüğünde, duygusal olarak bunu abartırım.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Kendi kusur ve yetersizliklerime karşı hoşgörölüyümdür.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Benim için önemli bir şeyde başarısız olduğumda, başarısızlığın yalnız benim başıma geldiği duygusunu hissetme eğiliminde olurum.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT

Bu çalışma, ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü doktora öğrencisi Funda Barutçu Yıldırım ve öğretim üyesi Prof. Dr. Ayhan Demir tarafından yürütülmektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinin kendini sabotajını yordayan değişkenleri (cinsiyet, öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı ve öz-anlayış) incelemektir. Çalışmaya katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük temelindedir. Ankette, sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamen gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir; elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacaktır. Anket, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda anketi uygulayan kişiye, anketi tamamlamadığınızı söylemek yeterli olacaktır. Anket sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Araş. Gör. Funda Barutçu Yıldırım (Tel: 2107168; E-posta: [barutcu@metu.edu.tr](mailto:barutcu@metu.edu.tr)) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

***Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.*** (Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

**Ad Soyad:**

**Tarih:**

**İmza:**

## APPENDIX C: CURRICULUM VITAE

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Barutçu Yıldırım, Funda

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: 06 June 1982, Giresun

Marital Status: Married

email: fundabrt@gmail.com

### EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Educational Sciences	2009
BS	Bogazici University, Science Teaching	2006
High School	Mehmet Akif Ersoy Anatolian High School, Tekirdağ	2001

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2010- ...	METU Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching	Research Assistant
2008- 2010	METU Science and Society Center	Research Assistant

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English

## PUBLICATIONS

### Articles

1. **Barutçu Yıldırım, F.**, & Demir, A. (2015). Breakup adjustment in young adulthood. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 93(1), 38-44.
2. **Barutçu Yıldırım, F.**, Yerin Güneri, O, & Çapa Aydın, Y. (2015). Üniversite öğrencilerinin memnuniyet düzeyi ve ilişkili değişkenler. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama*, 11(2),521-533.
3. **Barutçu, F.**, Çapa Aydın, Y. (2013). The Scale for Emotional Reactions Following the Breakup. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 786–790.

### Book chapter

1. Onaylı S. & **Barutçu, F.** (2013). Self-esteem and self-types. Halkias, D. (Editor). *Psychology and the search for certainty in everyday life* (ss.181-192). Atina:Atiner

### Papers (International):

1. **Barutçu Yıldırım, F.**, Çapa, Y., Güneri, O., Çağ, P. (2013, Eylül). Predicting college student success and gains: College engagement and perceived English language proficiency. Avrupa Eğitim Araştırmaları Kongresinde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye.



2. Çağ, P., **Barutçu Yıldırım, F.**, Aydın, G., Erkan Atik, Z. (2013, Eylül). Investigating the role of Facebook usage, life satisfaction, self-esteem and social support in predicting the loneliness of Turkish university student, Dünya Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye.
3. **Barutçu, F.**, Demir, A. (2012, Şubat). Breakup adjustment in young adulthood. Kıbrıs Uluslararası Eğitim Araştırmaları Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. ODTÜ Kuzey Kıbrıs Kampüsü, Güzelyurt, Kıbrıs.
4. **Barutçu, F.**, Çapa Aydın, Y. (2012, Mayıs). The Scale for emotional reactions following the breakup. 3. Dünya Psikoloji Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. İzmir, Türkiye.
5. Onaylı, S., **Barutçu, F.** (2011, Mayıs). Relationship between self-esteem and self-types. 5. Uluslararası Psikoloji Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Atina, Yunanistan.

#### **Papers (National):**

1. Çağ, P., Aydın, G. **Yıldırım Barutçu, F.**, Yerin Güneri, O. Çapa Aydın, Y. (2015, Nisan). Üniversite öğrencilerinin başarı ve başarısızlıklarını etkileyen faktörlere nitel bir bakış. VIII. Üniversiteler Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Sempozyumu'nda sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eskişehir.
2. **Barutçu, F.**, Yerin Güneri, O., Çapa Aydın, Y. (2012, Eylül). Üniversite düzeyinde öğrenci memnuniyeti ve ilişkili değişkenler. Uygulamalı Eğitim Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Ankara, Türkiye.
3. Ceylandağ, R., Dolunay, F., & **Barutçu, F.** (2012, Eylül). Communication in academic context and job satisfaction: Research

assistants' perspective. Uygulamalı Eğitim Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Ankara, Türkiye.

4. Sart, Z. H., Akkuş, A., Arıcı, N., Ayan, N., **Barutçu, F.**, Çırpıcı, B., Özdemir, S., Öztürk, S., & Turan, N. (2005, Eylül). Öğretmen ve rehber danışman adaylarının kaynaştırma yönelik tutumları: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi örneği. 14. Ulusal Eğitim Bilimleri Kongresi'nde sözlü bildiri olarak sunulmuştur. Pamukkale Üniversitesi, Denizli, Ankara.

### **Research Reports**

1. Çapa Aydın, Y., Yerin Güneri, O., Eret Orhan, & **Barutçu, F.**, (2014). *Akademik danışmanlık uygulamasını değerlendirme çalışması: Öğrenci görüşleri*. ODTÜ, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

2. Yerin Güneri, O., Sümer, C., Çapa Aydın, Y., Çağ, P. & **Barutçu, F.** (2013). *ODTÜ mezun anketi çalışması*. ODTÜ, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

3. Yerin Güneri, O., Sümer, C., Çapa Aydın, Y., Çağ, P. & **Barutçu, F.** (2013). *ODTÜ öğrenci anketi çalışması*. ODTÜ Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

4. Çapa Aydın, Y., Yerin Güneri, O., **Barutçu, F.**, Aydın, G., & Yumurtacı, D. (2011). *ODTÜ lisans öğrencileri üniversite yaşamı çalışması sonuçları*. ODTÜ, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

5. Çapa Aydın, Y., Yerin Güneri, O., **Barutçu, F.**, Yumurtacı, D., & Aydın, G. (2011). *ODTÜ uluslararası öğrenci üniversite yaşamı çalışması sonuçları*. ODTU, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

6. apa Aydın, Y., Yerin Güneri, O., **Barutu, F.**, Aydın, G., & Yumurtacı, D. (2011). *ODTÜ öđrenci memnuniyeti alışması sonuçları*. ODTÜ, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

7. Yerin Güneri, O., apa Aydın, Y., **Barutu, F.**, Yumurtacı, D., & Aydın, G. (2011).ODTÜ *Uluslararası öđrenci memnuniyeti alışması sonuçları*. ODTÜ, Öğrenme ve Öğrenci Gelişim Birimi: Ankara.

## **HOBBIES**

Squash, theatre, creative arts with recycling metarials.

## APPENDIX D: TURKISH SUMMARY

### Giriş

“Öz” ilk bakışta yaygın olarak kullanılan basit ve sıradan bir kelime gibi görünse de aslında karmaşık, çok boyutlu ve benzersiz bir yapıdır. Öze bir kelime olarak bakıldığında görünen beyaz renk, prizmadan geçirilirse özün renkli yapısını ve gökkuşağı renklerini ortaya çıkarır. Öncü bir filozof ve psikolog olan William James, öz kavramına bakarken prizmayı kullanarak, öz teorisini geliştirmiştir. James’e (1890) göre öz “Bilinen Benlik” ve “Bilen Benlik” olmak üzere iki kısımdan oluşmaktadır. Bilinen benlik maddi, sosyal ve manevi olarak üç öğeye ayrılmıştır. Bilinen benliğin maddi ögesi vücudumuz, kıyafetlerimiz, ailemiz, mal mülk gibi sahip olduğumuz unsurları içerir. Sosyal ögesi ise, kendimizi başkalarına nasıl sunduğumuzla alakalıdır. Farklı sosyal ortamlarda, kendimizi başkalarına sunma biçimimiz de değişir; bu nedenle bilinen benliğin birçok sosyal ögesi mevcuttur. Bilinen benliğin manevi ögesi, özün çekirdeğini oluşturur; ruhsal özellikleri, temel değer yargılarını ve vicdanı kapsayan daha içsel ve öznel kısımları içerir.

“Bilen benlik”, “bilinen benliği” geliştirmek için sürekli yeni bilgi arayışındadır. İnsanlar, kendilerini tanımak için fiziksel, sosyal ve psikolojik kaynaklarını kullanarak araştırma yapar (Brown, 1998). Bu araştırmaların sonucunda elde edilen yeni bilgilerin işlenmesi, değerlendirilmesi ve düzenlenmesi gerekmektedir (Showers, 1992). Öze ilişkin bilgilerin araştırılması ve değerlendirilmesinde doğruluk, yüceltme tutarlılık gibi farklı motivasyonlarla farklı yollar kullanılabilir (Brown, 1998).

Sedikides (1993) kendini değerlendirme sürecini öz-değerlendirme, öz-yüceltme ve öz-tutarlılık olarak üç kategori altında özetlemiştir. İlk

kategoride yer alan öz-değerlendirme, öze ilişkin doğru bilgilerin aranması ve toplanmasıdır. Burda amaç kişinin benliğine ilişkin belirsizlikleri azaltmak, objektif bilgiler elde ederek benliğe ilişkin büyük resmi netleştirmektir. Öz-değerlendirme yapan kişiler belli bir beceri, yetenek ya da zekayı ölçen, tanılama değeri yüksek ölçeklere güvenirlir. İkinci kategorideki öz-yüceltme, olumlu ve güçlü yönleri vurgulayan bilgileri elde etmeye çalışır. Öze ilişkin elde edilen bilgilerin hepsi doğruluk kriterine göre değerlendirilmez, bunun yerine sadece olumlu bilgiler süzülerek alınır; olumlu olan öz şemalar kuvvetlendirilirken, olumsuz olanlardan kaçınılır. Öz-yüceltme motivasyonuna sahip kişiler, öz kavramları üzerinde istenmeyen etkileri olan olumsuz bilgilerden kaçınırsalar da sonunda bu bilgilerin olumlu getirisi olacağını düşünürlerse belirli bir dereceye kadar olumsuz bilgilere tolerans gösterebilirler. Üçüncü kategoride yer alan öz-tutarlılıkta ise, temel olan öze ilişkin var olan bilginin tutarlılığının doğrulanmasıdır. Öze ilişkin eldeki bilgiler olumlu ise, bunu doğrulayacak olumlu geri bildirimler aranır, olumsuz ise olumsuz geri bildirimler göz önünde bulundurulur. Net olmayan, belirsiz kısımları araştıran öz-değerlendirmeden farklı olarak öz-tutarlılık net olan bilgileri yeniden bulup doğrulatmaya çalışır. Öz-yüceltmeden farklı olarak ise sadece olumlu bilgileri değil, var olan öz bilgilerle tutarlı hem olumlu hem olumsuz bilgileri kullanır. Kısacası bu kategoride bilginin tutarlı olması, doğru olmasından ya da olumlu olmasından daha önemlidir.

Bazı araştırmacılar ve kuramcılar insanların kendileriyle ilgili doğru bilgileri edinmeye ihtiyaç duyduğunu öne sürmektedir (Festinger, 1954; Thorndike, 1912; Westberg ve Jason, 2012). Ancak bu ihtiyaç herkes için geçerli olmayabilir (Brown, 1998; McClelland, 1961). Sedikides (1993), seri halinde yaptığı beş araştırmayla insanların kendileri ile ilgili bilgi edinme motivasyonlarını incelemiş ve en çok olumlu özelliklerin seçici olarak ele alındığı öz-yüceltme motivasyonunu kullandıklarını, en az ise

kendileri hakkında gerçek ve doğru bilgileri araştırdıkları öz-değerlendirme motivasyonunu kullandıklarını bulmuştur.

İnsanlar kendilerini olduğundan ve başkalarından daha iyi görme eğilimindedirler. Bir grup üniversite öğrencisinden olumlu ve olumsuz özelliklerin bulunduğu bir listeye göre hem kendilerini hem de diğer üniversite öğrencilerini değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir ve sonuçlar öğrencilerin büyük bir çoğunluğunun kendilerini diğer öğrencilerden daha olumlu değerlendirdiğini göstermiştir (Brown, 1998). Bu çalışma, Blaine ve Crocker tarafından “kendine hizmet eden yanlılık” olarak tanımlanan, öze ilişkin bilgilerin doğruluğunu gözetmeksizin, hoşça giden olumlu bir biçimde yorumlanmasına örnek oluşturmaktadır. İnsanların çoğu kendilerini iyi hissetmek istediği için hoşça giden, olumlu geri bildirimleri aramayı, olumsuz olanlardan kaçınmayı, olumsuz geri bildirimin kaçınılmaz olduğu durumlarda ise bu geri bildirimlerin uygulamalarını lehine çevirmek için değiştirmeyi içeren kendine hizmet eden yanlılığı kullanırlar.

Kendini sabotaj<sup>1</sup>, kendine hizmet eden yanlılığa verilebilecek en iyi örneklerden biridir (Snyder ve ark., 1985; Smith ve ark., 1983). Kendini sabotaj, öz-yetkinliği korumak ya da yüceltmek amacıyla, olası başarısızlığı açıklayabilmek için engel yaratmak ya da engelin varlığını iddia etmek olarak tanımlanabilir (Jones ve Berglas, 1978). Jones ve Berglas Kelly’nin indirgeme ve arttırma ilkelerini kendini sabotaja uyarlamıştır. Arttırma prensibine göre yetkinliğin arttırılması gerekmektedir. Kendini sabotajda oluşturulan ya da iddia edilen engel başarıyı azaltan neden olarak görülürken, başarıyı arttıran neden ise yetenek olarak görülmektedir. Performans başarısızlıkla sonuçlanırsa,

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<sup>1</sup> Self-handicapping teriminin kendini engelleme ve kendini sabotaj gibi farklı kullanımları bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Kendini Sabotaj Ölçeği (Akin, 2012) kullanıldığından çalışma boyunca kendini sabotaj ifadesi kullanılmıştır.

indirgeme prensibi devreye girer, başarısızlığın nedeni varolan engelle yüklenir ve başarısızlık dışsallaştırılır. Engelin varolmasına rağmen, performans başarıyla tamamlanırsa da arttırma prensibi kullanılarak başarının nedeni yeteneğe yüklenir böylece yetkinlik arttırılır ve başarı içselleştirilir. Bu şekilde öz-yetkinlik için olumsuz bir çıkarım yapılmaz ve öz-yetkinlik korunmuş ya da arttırılmış olur (Jones ve Berglas, 1978).

Alanyazın, kendini sabotajın oluşumuna, biçimine ve seviyesine katkı sağlayan birçok faktörün olduğuna işaret etmektedir (Brown ve Kimble, 2009). Diğer kendini koruma stratejilerinde olduğu gibi, kendini sabotajın kullanımında da kişisel farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Ancak öz-kavramlara yönelik öngörülen tehdit, kişinin yeteneğinden emin olmaması, öz-sunum endişesi (Rhodewalt ve ark., 1991), kişinin kendinden başarı beklemesi/başkalarının kişiden başarı beklemesi, öz-odaklanma/diğer odaklanma (Hirt ve ark., 2000; Kimble ve Hirt, 2005), geri dönüt çeşitleri (Brown ve Kimble, 2009), verilen görevin önemi ve önceden var olan çevresel engeller (Shepperd ve Arkin, 1989a) gibi öncüller kendini sabotajın kullanılma olasılığını etkileyebilmektedir.

Kendini sabotaj, engelin yaratılması ya da engelin olduğunun iddia edilmesi bakımından ikiye ayrılır (Arkin ve Baumgardner, 1985; Leary ve Shepperd, 1986). Başarılı bir performans için engelin aktif olarak oluşturulması davranışsal kendini sabotaj olarak adlandırılırken, engelin olduğunun iddia edilmesi ise mazeret bulma olarak adlandırılmaktadır (Brown ve ark., 2012). Sınavdan önce daha az alıştırmak yapmak (Brown ve Kimble, 2009), önemli bir sınavdan önceki gece eve çok geç gelmek (Warner ve Moore, 2004) davranışsal kendini sabotajın örneklerindendir. Ruh halinin kötü olduğunu (Baumgardner ve ark., 1985) ya da sınav kaygısına sahip olduğunu iddia etmek ise (Smith ve ark., 1982), mazeret bulmanın örneklerindendir. Davranışsal kendini sabotajda engel gerçekten oluşturulduğu için başarı olasılığı azalır. Bu nedenle daha

maliyetlidir ancak daha inandırıcıdır. Mazeret bulma iddiaya dayandığı için daha az maliyetli ve daha az inandırıcıdır (Leary ve Shepperd, 1986). Bu çalışma kapsamında, kendini sabotaj genel kişilik özelliği olarak incelenmiş, kendini sabotajın çeşitleri ele alınmamıştır.

Davranışsal kendini sabotajda cinsiyet farkını inceleyen araştırmaların neredeyse tamamı erkek baskınlığına işaret etmektedir (McCrea, Hirt ve Milner, 2008). Bazı çalışmalar sadece erkeklerin davranışsal sabotaj kullandıklarını, kadınların ise davranışsal sabotaj kullanmayı tercih etmediklerini gösterirken (Hirt ve ark., 2000; Rhodewalt ve Davison, 1986), bazıları da davranışsal kendini sabotajı erkeklerin kadınlardan daha çok kullandığını göstermektedir (Shepperd ve Arkin, 1989b). Mazeret bulmada cinsiyet farkı olmadığını gösteren çalışmalarla birlikte (Feick ve Rhodewalt, 1997) erkeklerin daha çok mazeret bulduklarını gösteren çalışmalar da bulunmaktadır (Snyder ve ark., 1985). Mazeret bulmada olduğu gibi, kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotajda de tutarlı bir cinsiyet farkı yoktur. Anlamlı bir cinsiyet farkı olmadığını bulan çalışmaların (Zuckerman ve Tsai, 2005) yanı sıra, bazı araştırmalar da kadınların kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaja daha eğilimli olduğunu göstermektedirler (Elliot ve Church, 2003; Warner ve Moore, 2004).

Cinsiyetin yanında öz-saygı kendini sabotajı açıklayan en önemli değişkendir (Harris ve Snyder, 1986). Öz-saygıya gelmesi öngörülen bir tehdit kendini sabotajın fitilini ateşleyebilir (Snyder ve Smith, 1982; Tice, 1991). Alanyazında hem öz-saygısı yüksek olanların (Tice ve Baumeister, 1990) hem de düşük olanların daha çok kendini engellediklerini bulan çalışmalar (Prapavessis ve Grove, 1998) bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmalar, öz saygısı yüksek ve düşük olanların kendini sabotaj stratejilerini farklı amaçlarla kullandıklarını göstermektedir (Martin ve Brawley, 2002). Tice'ye (1991) göre öz saygısı düşük olanlar



öz-saygılarını korumak için, öz-saygısı yüksek olanlar ise öz-saygılarını arttırmak için kendini sabotajı kullanmaktadırlar.

İnsanların yaratıcılıklarına bağlı olarak pek çok davranış ve mazeret kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanılabilir. Üniversite öğrencileri arasında yaygın bir sorun olan erteleme (Kim ve Seo, 2015; Uzun-Özer ve ark., 2009) de kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanılmaktadır (Beck ve ark. 2000; Ferrari ve Tice, 2000). Ertelemenin arkasında pek çok neden olmasına rağmen, en iyi bilinenlerden biri öz-saygıyı korumaktır (Lay, Knish ve Zanatta, 1992). Erteleyenler bir işe başlamaktan ve o işi bitirmekten kaçınırlar (Tuckman, 1991). Böylece, erteleyenler sınırlı zamanları olduğu gerekçesiyle, yeteneklerine gelebilecek olumsuz değerlendirmeleri azaltmış olurlar (Ferrari, 1991). Kendini sabotaj bakış açısıyla, erteleyenler işe başlamayı ve bitirmeyi geciktirerek zaman kısıtı yaratırlar ve bunu akılsızlıklarını veya yeteneksizliklerini, kamufle etmek için kullanırlar. Böylece başarısızlıklarını açıklamak için ellerinde hazır bir açıklamaları olmuş olur. Çalışmalar erteleme ile kendini sabotaj arasındaki doğrusal ilişkinin altını çizmekte, kendini engelleyenlerin akademik sorumluluklarını yerine getirmeyi ertelediklerini, çalışmaya daha az zaman ayırırken, eğlenceye ve diğer aktivitelere daha çok zaman ayırdıklarını ortaya koymaktadır (Beck ve ark., 2000; Ferrari ve Tice, 2000).

Ertelemenin yanı sıra sınav kaygısı da kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanılabilir (Smith ve ark., 1982). Pek çok araştırma sınav kaygısının öğrencilerin sağlığı (Kavakcı ve ark., 2011) ve akademik başarıları (Brooks ve ark., 2015) üzerinde olumsuz etkileri olduğunu göstermektedir. Ancak bazı öğrenciler sınav kaygısından psikolojik öz-koruma şeklinde faydalanabilmektedirler (Thompson, 2013). Smith ve arkadaşları (1982) sınav kaygısının inandırıcı bir açıklama olarak algılandığı durumlarda, öğrencilerin sınav kaygısının belirtilerini

başarısızlıklarını açıklamada kullandıklarını göstermişlerdir. Zeki olmamaları nedeniyle değil de sınav kaygısı yüzünden, sınavdan kötü performans sergilediklerini öne sürerek öz-kavramlarını korumaktadırlar. Sınav kaygısına sahip olduğunu iddia etmek başarının önünde aktif olarak bir engel oluşturulmasını gerektirmez, bu nedenle kendini sabotajın mazeret bulma çeşidine girmektedir ve daha az maliyetlidir (Hirt ve ark., 2000; Leary ve Shepperd, 1986). Aynı zamanda öğretmenler sınav kaygısına, daha az çaba göstermek gibi diğer kendini sabotaj stratejilerine nazaran daha çok tolerans göstermektedirler (Hirt ve ark., 1991).

Erteleme ve sınav kaygısından farklı olarak öz-anlayış<sup>2</sup> kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak değil de kendini sabotajı azaltan bir faktör olarak ele alınabilir. Öz-anlayış, kendini sabotajın en önemli öncülü olan öz-kavramlara gelmesi öngörülen tehditi bertaraf etmektedir. Öz-anlayış öze yaklaşımda daha sağlıklı bir alternatif olarak sunulmuştur (Neff, 2003a). Öz-anlayışta, öz-değer sadece başarıya ve yetkinliğe bağlı değildir; başarısızlıklar ve yetersizlikler de kusursuz olmayan insan doğasının bir parçası olarak kabul görmektedir (Marshall ve ark., 2015). Ayrıca, öz anlayışta başkalarının değerlendirmeleri ve ideal standartlar temel alınmadığından, ego tehditleri ile uğraşmaya da gerek kalmaz (Neff ve ark., 2005). Öz-anlayış ile kendini sabotaj arasındaki ters ilişki teorik olarak oturmasına rağmen, hala bilimsel olarak desteklenmeye ihtiyaç duymaktadır. İki değişken arasındaki sınırlı sayıdaki araştırma öz-anlayışı yüksek olanların daha az kendini sabotaja eğilimli olduklarını göstermektedir (Akın ve Akın, 2015; Petersen, 2014).

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<sup>2</sup> Self-compassion teriminin öz-duyarlılık, öz-şefkat, öz-anlayış gibi farklı kullanımları bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Öz-Anlayış Ölçeği (Deniz, Kesici ve Sümer, 2008) kullanıldığından çalışma boyunca öz-anlayış ifadesi kullanılmıştır.

## **Çalışmanın Amacı**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın, öğrencilerin kendini sabotajını yordama güçlerini araştırmaktır.

## **Çalışmanın Önemi**

Lisans öğrencilerinin kendini sabotajını yordayan değişkenleri inceleyen bu çalışma pek çok açıdan önem taşımaktadır. Öncelikli olarak, öğrencilerin başarısı, eğitim kurumlarının tüm paydaşları için temel bir konudur, bu nedenle öğrencilerin başarısını etkileyebilecek engelleri ve problemleri tespit etmek için önemli ölçüde çaba sarf edilmektedir. Öğrenci başarısının önündeki engellerden biri de öğrencilerin kısa vadede yarar sağladıkları için kullandıkları ancak uzun vadede sağlıklarına, iyi oluşlarına ve akademik performanslarına olumsuz etki eden kendini sabotajdır (Zuckerman ve Tsai, 2005). Kendini sabotaj kısa vadede başarısızlık korkusu ile değerlendirme kaygısını azaltır (Deppe ve Harackiewicz, 1996). Ayrıca, başarısızlık durumu karşısında, başarısızlığı yeteneksizlik, beceriksizlik gibi içsel nedenlerle açıklamak yerine dışsal nedenlere atfetmeyi sağladığı için oluşan ego tehdidinin olumsuz etkilerini de azaltır. (Brown ve Kimble, 2009). Başka bir deyişle kendini sabotaj, olumlu benlik algısını korumak için kullanılır (Hirt ve ark. 2000). Ancak doğrudan ya da dolaylı olarak olumlu benlik algısına zarar verebilir. Araştırmalar kendini sabotaj düzeyi yüksek olan kişilerin, işlevsiz başatma becerilerini daha çok kullandıklarını, daha olumsuz duygulara ve düşük öz-saygıya sahip olduklarını (Zuckerman ve ark., 1998), daha çok alkol ve uyuşturucu kullandıklarını (Zuckerman ve Tsai, 2005), depresyon, kaygı ve stres seviyelerinin daha yüksek olduğunu (Sahranç, 2011) ve dış kontrol odağı ile uyumsuz mükemmelliyetçiliği daha çok kullandıklarını (Arazzini-Stewart ve De George-Walker, 2014) göstermektedir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin akademik deneyimleri ve

kazanımlarıyla da ters ilişkilidir; bunlar arasında okula uyumu zorlaştırması, kuralların daha çok çiğnenmesi, öğretmenlerle daha zayıf ilişkiler geliştirilmesi (Määttä ve ark., 2002), kopya çekmeye daha çok eğilimli olunması (Özgüngör, 2008) ve daha düşük ortalamaya sahip olunması (Zuckerman ve ark., 1998) gibi konular yer almaktadır. Bu bağlamda, öğrenciler tarafından kısa vadeli yarar sağladığı için kullanılan ama uzun vadede olumsuz ve zararlı etkileri olan kendini sabotajın incelenmesi önem taşımaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra bu çalışma, kendini sabotaj ile ilişkili değişkenler hakkında bilgi sağlayarak, kendini sabotajın önlenmesi için de kullanılabilir.

İkinci olarak, kendini sabotaj batı alanyazınında yaklaşık kırk yıldır varolan ve hakkında pek çok araştırmanın yapıldığı bir kavram olmasına rağmen, Türk alanyazınında konu ile ilgili çok sınırlı sayıda araştırma bulunmaktadır. YÖK Tez Merkezi arama motorunda yapılan araştırma sonucu, bu zamana kadar sadece 7 yüksek lisans ve 1 doktora tezinde kendini sabotajın incelendiğini göstermiştir. Lisansüstü çalışmalarına benzer bir biçimde, konu ile ilgili az sayıda makale bulunmaktadır (örn. Akın ve Akın, 2015; Özgüngör, 2008; Elmas ve Akfırat, 2014). Bu makalelerin bir kısmında, yazarlar tarafından geliştirilen ya da çevirilen, geçerlilik ve güvenirlik çalışması tam olarak yapılmamış ölçekler kullanılmıştır. Geçerli ve güvenilir bir ölçekle kendini sabotajı araştıran bu çalışmanın da alanyazına katkı sağlaması umulmaktadır.

Üçüncü olarak, laboratuvar ortamında yapılan deneysel çalışmaların neredeyse tamamı erkeklerin davranışsal kendini sabotajı kadınlara göre daha çok kullandığı yönünde anlamlı bir cinsiyet farkına vurgu yaparken (Brown ve ark., 2012; Harris ve Snyder, 1986; Hirt ve ark., 1991; Shepperd ve Arkin, 1989b, 1991), mazeret bulmada cinsiyet farkına ilişkin çelişkili sonuçlar ortaya koymaktadır (Feick ve Rhodewalt, 1997; Snyder ve ark., 1985). Alanyazında kendini sabotajın çeşitlerine

(davranışsal kendini sabotaj ve mazeret bulma) ilişkin cinsiyet farkını araştıran pek çok araştırma bulunmasına rağmen bir kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotajdaki cinsiyet farkı yeterince araştırılmamıştır. Bu çalışmanın alanyazındaki bu boşluğu doldurmaya katkı sağlaması umulmaktadır.

Dördüncü olarak, kendini sabotaj temel olarak öze ilişkin kavramlara gelen tehditlerle tetiklenir (Rhodewalt ve ark., 1991; Synder ve Smith, 1982). Öz-saygı en çok üzerinde çalışılan ve farklı örneklemelerde farklı sonuçlar ortaya koyan (Prapavessis ve Grove, 1998; Tice ve Baumesiter, 1990) öze ilişkin en bilindik kavramlardan biridir. Öz-anlayış ise öz-saygıya göre daha az sorun içerdiği iddiasıyla, öze ilişkin daha sağlıklı bir alternatif olarak sunulmaktadır (Neff, 2003b; Neff, 2011). Ancak öz-anlayışın kendini sabotaj ile olan ilişkisi yeterince netleştirilmemiştir. Bizim bilgimiz dahilinde öz-saygının ve öz-anlayışın kendini sabotajı açıklamada ne kadar etkili olduğunu aynı model içerisinde inceleyen bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışma öz-saygı ile öz-anlayışın kendini sabotajı yordama güçlerini kıyaslama olanağı da sunmaktadır.

Son olarak erteleme ve sınav kaygısı eğitim ortamında karşılaşılan iki önemli sorun alanını oluşturmaktadır (Kim ve Seo, 2015; Pekrun, Goetz, Titz ve Perry, 2002). Bu sorun alanlarının arkasında farklı nedenler olabilir. Bu bağlanma bu çalışma, ertelemenin ve sınav kaygısının kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanımına ışık tutabilir.

## **YÖNTEM**

### **Katılımcılar**

Bu çalışmanın ulaşılmaya çalışılan nüfusunu Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde okuyan lisans programı öğrencileri, ulaşılabilir nüfusunu ise lisans

programlarında okuyan ODTÜ öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Katılımcılar, ODTÜ'nün farklı bölümlerinde okuyan öğrenciler arasından kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilmiştir. Otuz sekiz farklı bölümden, sekiz yüz bir gönüllü lisans öğrencisi çalışmaya katılmıştır. Katılımcıların 404'ü (%50,4) kadın, 397'si (%49,6) erkektir. Fakültelere göre dağılımlarına bakıldığında ise 372'sinin (% 46,4) Mühendislik Fakültesi'nden, 287'sinin (% 35,8) Eğitim Fakültesi'nden, 78'inin (% 9,7) İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi'nden, 59'unun (%7,4) Fen ve Edebiyat Fakültesi'nden, 4'ünün (% 0,5) ise Mimarlık Fakültesi'nden olduğu görülmektedir. Bir (% 0,1) katılımcı okuduğu fakülteyi belirtmemiştir. Katılımcılar arasında 201 (%31,3) birinci sınıf, 268 (% 33,5) ikinci sınıf, 135 (%16,9) üçüncü sınıf, 134 (% 16,7) dördüncü sınıf, 6 (% 0,7) beşinci sınıf öğrencisi bulunmaktadır. Katılımcıların genel akademik not ortalaması 0,33 ile 4,00 arasında değişmektedir (ort = 2,75, ss = 0.62).

### **Veri Toplama Araçları**

Bu çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak, Kendini Sabotaj Ölçeği, Rosenberg Öz-Saygı Ölçeği, Tuckman Erteleme Ölçeği, Akademik Duygular Ölçeğinin Kaygı Altboyutu, Öz-Anlayış Ölçeği ve demografik veri formu kullanılmıştır.

Jones ve Rhodewalt (1982) tarafından geliştirilen Kendini Sabotaj Ölçeği, hiç katılmıyorum (0) ile kesinlikle katılmıyorum (5) arasında değişen 6'lı ölçekte değerlendirilen 25 maddeyi içermektedir. Tek faktörlü ölçekte sekiz tane ters madde bulunmaktadır (madde 3, 5, 6, 10, 13, 20, 22 ve 23). Ankette “Sınav veya iş görüşmesi gibi önemli anlardan önceki geceler mümkün olduğunca uykumu almaya çalışırım.”, “Üzerimdeki sosyal baskıyı ortadan kaldırdığı için, bazı zamanlar bir iki günlüğüne hafif bir rahatsızlık bana zevk verir.” gibi maddeler yer almaktadır. Rhodewalt (1990) ölçeğin iç tutarlılık katsayısını .79 and test-tekrar test güvenirlik katsayısını ise .74 olarak bulmuştur. Akın (2012) ölçeğin

Türkçe adaptasyonunu yapmış ve bütün maddelerin tek faktöre yüklendiğini bulmuş, iç tutarlılık katsayısını .90, test-tekrar test güvenirlik katsayısını ise .94 olarak raporlamıştır. Bu çalışmada ise ölçeğe ait Cronbach alfa değeri .74 olarak bulunmuştur.

Rosenberg Öz-Saygı Ölçeği 1965 yılında Rosenberg tarafından 10 maddelik tek boyutlu bir ölçek olarak geliştirilmiştir. Maddeler kesinlikle katılmıyorum (1) ile kesinlikle katılıyorum (4) arasında değişen 4'lü ölçek üzerinde değerlendirilmektedir. Ölçekte 5 tane ters madde bulunmaktadır (madde 3, 5, 8, 9, 10). Ölçekte “Kendimi en az diğer insanlar kadar değerli buluyorum.”, “Bazen kesinlikle kendimin bir işe yaramadığını düşünüyorum.” gibi maddeler yer almaktadır. Ölçeğin orijinali için iki hafta arayla yapılan test tekrar test güvenirlik katsayıları .85 ve .88 olarak bulunmuştur. (Rosenberg, 1979; akt. Chubb, Fertman ve Ross, 1997, s. 120). Ölçeğin Türkçe adaptasyonu Çuhadaroğlu (1985) tarafından yapılmıştır. Psikiyatrik görüşme puanları ile RÖSÖ puanları arasındaki korelasyon .71 olarak bulunmuştur (Çuhadaroğlu, 1985). Bu çalışmada ölçeğe ait Cronbach alfa değeri .89 olarak bulunmuştur.

Tuckman Erteleme Ölçeği üniversite öğrencilerinin erteleme eğilimini belirlemek amacıyla 1991 yılında Tuckman tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Tek faktörlü yapı gösteren orjinal ölçekteki 16 madde (1) kesinlikle katılmıyorum ile (4) kesinlikle katılıyorum arasında değişen 4'lü ölçek üzerinde değerlendirilmektedir. Ölçekte “İşlerin teslim edilmesi gereken bir tarih olduğunda, son dakikaya kadar beklerim”, “Yapmaktan hoşlanmadığım şeylere başlamayı ertelerim.” gibi maddeler yer almaktadır. Orjinal çalışmada ölçeğin Cronbach alfa katsayısı Tuckman (1991) tarafından .86 olarak bulunmuştur. Tuckman (2007) tarafından daha sonra yapılan bir çalışmada ise ölçeğin Cronbach alfa katsayısı .91 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Uzun-Özer, Saçkes ve Tuckman (2013) ölçeğin Türkçe adaptasyonunu yapmış ve 2 maddeyi çıkararak ölçeğin Türkçe

formunu 14 madde olarak hazırlamıştır. Buna ek olarak, Uzun-Özer (2010),değişkenliği artırmak amacıyla, 4'lü olan değerlendirme ölçeğinde ortaya “kararsızım” seçeneğini de ekleyerek 5'li hale gerirmiştir. Ölçekte 4 tane ters madde bulunmaktadır (madde 7, 10, 12, 14). Ölçeğin Türkçe formunun Cronbach alfa değeri .90 olarak bulunmuştur (Uzun-Özer, Saçkes ve Tuckman, 2013). Bu çalışmada ölçeğe ait Cronbach alfa değeri .93 olarak bulunmuştur.

Akademik Duygular Ölçeği Pekrun, Goetz, Titz ve Perry tarafından geliştirilmiştir (2002). Bu çalışmada ölçeğin sadece, kaygı altboyutu kullanılmıştır. Altboyuttaki 8 madde (1) hiç bir zaman ile (5) her zaman arasında değişen 5'li ölçekte değerlendirilmektedir. Ölçekte ters madde yer almamaktadır. Ölçekte “Sınav sırasında o kadar gergin olurum ki sınavı atlatmış olmayı dilerim”, “Sınav sırasında mideme kramplar girer” gibi maddeler yer almaktadır. Altboyut için Cronbach alfa değeri .92 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Pekrun ve ark., 2002). Kaygı altboyutunun Türkçe adaptasyonu Çapa-Aydın ve Emmioğlu (2008) tarafından yapılmış ve Cronbach alfa değeri Türkçe formu için .87 olarak raporlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada ölçeğe ait Cronbach alfa değeri .85 olarak bulunmuştur.

Öz-Anlayış Ölçeği, 26 maddeli bir öz-bildirim ölçeği olarak Neff (2003a) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Maddeler (1) hiç bir zaman ile (5) her zaman arasında değişen 5'li ölçek üzerinde değerlendirilmektedir. Ölçekte 11 tane ters madde bulunmaktadır (madde 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22 ve 23). Ölçekte “İşler benim için kötü gittiğinde zorlukların yaşamın bir parçası olduğunu ve herkesin bu zorlukları yaşadığını görebilirim” ve “Çok sıkıntılıysam, kendime ihtiyacım olan ilgi ve şefkati gösteririm” gibi maddeler yer almaktadır. Ölçeğin orijinalinin öz-sevecenlik, öz-yargılama, paylaşımların bilincinde olma, izolasyon, bilinçlilik, aşırı özdeşleşme olmak üzere 6 alt boyutu bulunmaktadır. Cronbach alfa katsayısı ölçeğin geneli için.92 olarak hesaplanırken, alt boyutlar için ise sırasıyla .78, .77,



.80, .79, .75, .81 olarak bulunmuştur. Test tekrar test güvenirlik katsayısı tüm ölçek için .93, alt ölçekler için ise sırasıyla .88, .88, .80, .85, .85, .88 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Neff, 2003a). Ölçeğin Türkçe adaptasyonu Deniz, Kesici ve Sümer (2008) tarafından yapılmıştır. Toplam madde korelasyonu .30'dan küçük olan iki madde ölçekten çıkarılmış, kalan 24 madde ise tek faktöre yüklenmiştir. Ölçeğin Türkçe versiyonunun iç-tutarlılık katsayısı ve test tekrar test güvenirlik katsayısı sırasıyla .89 ve .83 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Deniz, Kesici ve Sümer, 2008). Bu çalışmada ölçeğe ait Cronbach alfa değeri .91 olarak bulunmuştur.

Demografik bilgi formunda ise cinsiyet, bölüm, sınıf, not ortalaması bilgilerini soran maddeler yer almaktadır.

### **Verilerin Toplanması**

Çalışmanın etik kurallar çerçevesinde yürütülmesi için ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulundan gerekli izin alınmıştır. Sınıflarda veri toplamak için öğretim üyelerinden izin alındıktan sonra, veri toplama süreci haftalık olarak planlanmış ve veri toplama işlemi araştırmacı tarafından üç haftada tamamlanmıştır. Veri toplamaya başlamadan önce araştırmacı, araştırmaya katılımın gönüllülük esasına dayandığını, katılımcılardan hiçbir kişisel bilgi istenmediğini, çalışmanın anonimlik prensibine göre yürütüldüğünü ve çalışmanın amacını katılımcılara açıklamıştır. Çalışmaya katılmayı kabul edenlere gönüllü katılım formları dağıtılıp toplandıktan sonra, veri toplama araçları ders saati sırasında katılımcılara dağıtılmıştır. Katılımcıların ölçekleri tamamlaması 10-15 dakika sürmüştür.

### **Verilerin Analizi**

Verilerin analizine başlamadan önce pilot çalışma ve ana çalışma için hatalı ve eksik veriler kontrol edilmiştir. Ana çalışma için eksik veriler

5%'ten az olduğundan eksik veri analizi yapılmamıştır. Kullanılan ölçeklerin bu örnekleme çalışıp çalışmadığını test etmek amacıyla yapılan pilot çalışmadan elde edilen verilerle, ölçeklere Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi uygulanmış ve ölçeklerin bu örneklem için geçerli olduğu bulunmuştur. Ölçeklerin güvenilirliği Cronbach alfa değeri ile hesaplanmıştır. Bulunan güvenilirlik katsayılarının .70'in üzerinde olması (Nunnally ve Bernstein, 1978), bu çalışmada kullanılan ölçeklerin bu örneklem için güvenilir olduğunu göstermektedir.

Cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın, öğrencilerin kendini sabotaj düzeylerini yordama güçlerini incelemek amacıyla yapılan hiyerarşik regresyon analizinden önce gerekli varsayımlar kontrol edilmiş, verilerin analize uygunluğunun anlaşılmasının ardından ise hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılmıştır.

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılırken ölçeklere ait toplam puan yerine ortalama değerinin kullanılması tercih edilmiştir. Bunun nedeni ise bu çalışmada %5'ten az olsa da boş veri bulunmasıdır. Toplanan veride boş veri olmaması halinde, toplam puan veya ortalama değer kullanarak analizi yapmak anlamlı bir fark yaratmamaktadır. Ancak toplam puan hesaplanırken boş veriler sıfır olarak kabul edildiği için toplam puan kullanmak hata payı içermektedir. Bu nedenle bu çalışmada sınırlı bir değişkenlik aralığına sahip olmasına rağmen, boş verilerden etkilenmediği için ortalama değer kullanılması tercih edilmiştir.

Değişkenler, literatürde belirtilen önem sırasına göre modele dahil edilmiştir. Önceki çalışmalar, kendini sabotajda belirgin bir cinsiyet farkına işaret ettiği için (Brown ve Kimble, 2009; Hirt ve McCrea, 2009) ilk aşamada cinsiyet eklenmiştir. İkinci aşamada kendini sabotajı açıklayan en temel faktör olan öz-saygı (Harris ve Snyder, 1986; Warner ve Moore, 2004) modele eklenmiştir. Kendini sabotajla büyük oranda örtüşen erteleme (Beck ve ark., 2000; Ferrari ve Tice, 2000; Lay ve ark., 1992),

ise üçüncü aşamada modele eklenmiştir. Dördüncü aşamada ise kendini sabotajla ilişkili önemli bir değişken olan sınav kaygısı (Smith ve ark., 1982) modele eklenmiştir. Son aşamada ise daha az incelenen, yeni fakat dikkate alınması gereken bir değişken olan öz-anlayış (Akın ve Akın, 2015; Petersen, 2014) modele eklenmiştir.

Bu çalışmada, literatüre dayanarak kendini sabotajı açıklayan bir model önerilmiştir. Bu modelde kendini sabotaj (Y), cinsiyet ( $X_1$ ), öz-saygı ( $X_2$ ), erteleme ( $X_3$ ), sınav kaygısı ( $X_4$ ) ve öz-anlayış ( $X_5$ ) tarafından yordanmaktadır. Modelin formülasyonu ise şu şekildedir:  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 +$

### **Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları**

Bu çalışmanın bazı sınırlılıkları bulunmaktadır. Örneklemin rastlantısal örnekleme yöntemi ile seçilmemiş olması; kolayda örnekleme yöntemi ile sadece bir üniversiteden elde edilmesi, sonuçların genellenebilirliğini sınırlamaktadır. Sadece öz-bildirim ölçeklerinin kullanılması da çalışmanın ikinci sınırlılığıdır. Bu çalışmada akranların ya da öğretim üyelerinin değerlendirmeleri ya da gözlem sonucu edinilen bilgiler kullanılmamış, öz-bildirim ile öğrencilerin verdiği yanıtlar doğru kabul edilmiştir. Çalışmanın üçüncü sınırlılığı ise, Türkçeye adapte edilen kendini sabotaj ölçeğinin kabul edilebilir model uygunluğuna ve geçerlilik katsayısına sahip olmasına rağmen, iyi bir model uygunluğu ve yüksek bir geçerlilik katsayısına sahip olmamasıdır. Çalışmanın dördüncü sınırlılığı kesitsel tarama desenine göre veri toplanmasıdır, veriler sadece tek bir zaman diliminde toplanmış, boylamsal olarak ele alınmamıştır. Bu nedenle süreç içinde öğrencilerin kendini sabotajları hakkında elde edilebilecek bilgiler sınırlanmıştır.. Belirli zamanlarda örneğin sınavlardan hemen önce öğrencilerin kendini sabote etme ve erteleme eğilimleri ile sınav kaygıları artabilmektedir. Bu zaman dilimlerinde veri toplanması ise

öğrencilerin ölçeklerde yer alan maddelere verdikleri yanıtları etkilemektedir. Çalışmanın son sınırlılığı ise, katılımcıların sosyal istenirlik düzeylerinin kontrol edilmemesidir. Veriler anonimlik kuralına göre toplanmıştır, katılımcılardan hiç bir kişisel bilgi istenmemiştir, ancak sosyal istenirlik düzeylerini kontrol etmek amacıyla ek bir ölçek verilmemiştir.

## BULGULAR

### Betimsleyici İstatistik Bulguları

Çalışmanın yordayıcı değişkenleri (öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı ve öz-anlayış) ile yordanan değişkenini (kendini sabotaj) tanımlamak için her değişkene ait ortalama, standart sapma, minimum ve maksimum değerler hesaplanmış ve Tablo 4.1’de sunulmuştur.

Tablo 4.1

*Betimsleyici istatistik bulguları*

<i>Değişkenler</i>	<i>Ort.</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Kendini sabotaj	2.19	0.50	0	5
Öz-saygı	3.10	0.55	1	4
Ertelleme	3.04	0.82	1	5
Sınav kaygısı	2.20	0.75	1	5
Öz anlayış	3.12	0.62	1	5

Öz-saygı değişkeninin ortalama değeri 3.10, standart sapması 0.55; ertelleme değişkeninin ortalama değeri 3.04, standart sapması 0.82; sınav kaygısı değişkeninin ortalama değeri 2.20, standart sapması 0.75; öz-anlayış değişkeninin ortalama değeri 3.12, standart sapması 0.62;

kendini sabotaj deęiřkeninin ortalama deęeri 2.19, standart sapması 0.50 olarak hesaplanmıřtır.

### Korelasyon Matrisi Bulguları

Çalıřmanın ana deęiřkenleri arasındaki iliřkiler, pearson korelasyon katsayısı kullanılarak hesaplanmıř ve Tablo 4.2’de sunulmuřtur. Tüm deęiřkenler arasında anlamlı iliřkiler olduęu saptanmıřtır. En yüksek korelasyon katsayısı ( $r = .63$ ) kendini sabotaj ve erteleme deęiřkenleri arasında; en düşük korelasyon katsayısı ise ( $r = .22$ ) sınav kaygısı ve erteleme deęiřkenleri arasında bulunmuřtur.

Tablo 4.2

#### *Korelasyon Matrisi Bulguları*

<i>Deęiřkenler</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Kendini sabotaj	1.00				
Öz-saygı	-.55*	1.00			
Erteleme	.63*	-.36*	1.00		
Sınav kaygısı	.49*	-.42*	.22*	1.00	
Öz-anlayıř	-.55*	.62*	-.36*	-.42*	1.00

\* $p < .05$

### Hiyerarřik Regresyon Analizi Bulguları

Hiyerarřik regresyon analizi yapmadan önce örneklem sayısı, normal daęılım hataları, eř varyanslık, bağımsız hatalar, doğrusallık, çoklu doğrusal bağlantı, etkileyici gözlem varsayımları kontrol edilmiř ve sonuçlar verinin analize uygun olduęunu göstermiřtir (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2001).

Cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın, öğrencilerin kendini sabotaj düzeylerini yordama güçlerini belirlemek için her adımda sırasıyla modele bir yordayıcı eklenerek, hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Hiyerarşik regresyon analizinin sonuçları Tablo 4.4'te özetlenmiştir.

Table 4.4

*Hiyerarşik Regresyon Analizi Sonuçlarının Özeti*

Değişkenler	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	sr2	R2	$\Delta F$
Model 1						.01	5.16
Cinsiyet	-.08	.04	-0.8	-2.27	.01		
Model 2						.30	340.56
Öz-saygı	-.50	.03	-.55	-18.45	.30		
Model 3						.22	360,55
Ertelme	.31	.02	.50	18.99	.22		
Model 4						.06	107.77
Sınav Kaygısı	.18	.02	.27	10.38	.06		
Model 5						.02	33.24
Öz-anlayış	-.14	.02	-,17	-5.77	.02		

\* $p < .05$

İlk olarak, modele cinsiyet eklenmiştir. Cinsiyet değişkenine ait sonuçlar, modelin anlamlı olduğunu ve cinsiyetin kendini erteleme değişkeninin % 1'lik varyansını açıkladığını göstermektedir,  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 798) = 5.16$ ,  $p < .05$ . İkinci olarak, modele öz-saygı değişkeni dahil edilmiş, anlamlı bir artış olduğu saptanmış ve öz-saygının kendini sabotajın %30 varyansını açıkladığı bulunmuştur,  $\Delta R^2 = .30$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 797) = 340.56$ ,  $p < .05$ . Üçüncü aşamada eklenen erteleme değişkeni ile oluşan anlamlı modelde, erteleme % 22'lik varyansı açıklamıştır,  $\Delta R^2 = .22$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 796)$

= 360.55,  $p < .05$ . Dördüncü aşamada eklenen sınav kaygısı da yine anlamlı bir modelle sonuçlanmış ve varyansın % 6'sını açıklamıştır,  $\Delta R^2 = .06$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 795) = 107.77$ ,  $p < .05$ . Son olarak eklenen öz-anlayış açıklanan varyansta % 2'lik anlamlı bir artışa neden olmuştur,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $\Delta F (1, 794) = 33.24$ ,  $p < .05$ . Yordayıcı değişkenlerin hepsinin anlamlı yordayıcılar olarak sabotaj değişkeni açıklamada önemli katkısı bulunmaktadır. Modelin tamamı varyansın %61'ini açıklarken cinsiyet, öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı ve öz-anlayış değişkenlerinin açıkladıkları varyanslar sırasıyla %1, %30, %22, %6, ve %2'dir.

## TARTIŞMA

Bu çalışmada, cinsiyetin, öz-saygının, ertelemenin, sınav kaygısının ve öz-anlayışın lisans öğrencilerinin kendini sabotajını yordamadaki rollerinin araştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Bulgular, test edilen değişkenlerinin hepsinin anlamlı yordayıcılar olarak kendini sabotajı açıklamaya katkı sağladığını göstermiştir.

Bu çalışmada cinsiyetin anlamlı bir yordayıcı olduğu ve kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotajda %1'lik varyansı açıkladığı, kadınların kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaj eğilimlerinin erkeklerden daha fazla olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu bulgu, cinsiyet farkını inceleyen diğer araştırma bulgularıyla dikkatli bir biçimde kıyaslanmalıdır çünkü bu çalışmaların çoğu davranışsal kendini sabotajda cinsiyet farkını inceleyip bariz bir erkek hakimiyeti bulmuşlardır (Berglas ve Jones, 1978; Hirt ve ark., 1991; Rhodewalt ve Davison, 1986). Kadınlar genellikle davranışsal kendini engelleme kullanmayı tercih etmemektedirler (Baumeister ve ark., 1985; Berglas ve Jones, 1978; Harris ve Snyder, 1986; Hirt ve ark., 1991; Hirt ve ark., 2000; Kimble ve Hirt, 2005) ya da erkeklerden daha az kullanmaktadırlar (Brown ve ark., 2012). Davranışsal kendini sabotajdan farklı olarak mazeret bulmada cinsiyet farkı ile ilgili tutarlı sonuçlar

bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışma, kadınların kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaj eğilimlerinin erkeklerden daha fazla olduğunu gösteren araştırmalarla (Elliot ve Church, 2003; Warner ve Moore, 2004) paralellik gösterirken, cinsiyeti anlamsız bir yordayıcı olarak bulan çalışmalarla (Martin ve Brawley, 2002; Zuckerman ve Tsai, 2005) çelişmektedir.

Kadınların davranışsal sabotaj kullanmaması, kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaj eğilimlerinin az olması yönünde bir beklenti oluşturabilir, bu bağlamda çalışmanın bu bulgusu ilk bakışta enteresan görünebilir. Bu çelişki, kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak seçilen davranış çeşitlerinden kaynaklanabilir. Davranışsal kendini sabotaj tek bir davranışla tanımlanırken, kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaj birçok davranış, duygu, düşünce ve özellik içermektedir. Başkalarının önünde performansı azaltan seçenekleri seçmek (Berglas ve Jones, 1978; Brown ve ark., 2012; Brown ve Kimble, 2009), alkol tüketmek (Tucker ve ark., 1981), çabayı azaltmak (Baumeister ve ark., 1985; Harris ve Snyder, 1986; Hirt ve ark., 2000; Kimble ve Hirt, 2005) gibi davranışlar kadınlar için performansı düşüren riskli davranışlar olabilir. Kadınlar daha az risk almayı tercih ettikleri için (Byrnes ve Miller, 1999), ayrıca çabaya daha fazla önem verdikleri için çabayı azaltmayı kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanmazlar (McCrea ve ark., 2007). Kısacası kadınlar belirli davranışları yapmasalar da, öz-kavramlarını korumak için kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaja daha çok eğilimli olabilirler. Bu durum kadınların kendini nasıl değerlendirdiği ile de ilişkili olabilir. Cooley'in "ayna benlik" kavramına göre öz-değerlendirme kişinin başkaları tarafından nasıl görüldüğüne ilişkin algılarına dayanmaktadır. Kadınlar başkalarının değerlendirmelerine karşı daha duyarlı, daha endişeli ve kişiler arası tehditlere karşı daha kırılgandırlar (Simmons ve Rosenberg, 1975), ayrıca erkeklere kıyasla kendilerine daha az güvenirliler (Lirgg, 1991). Bu bağlamda, kadınların başarısızlık beklentisi daha yüksek olabilir ve başarısızlık geribildirimleri öz-kavramlarına olumsuz etki edebilir. Kadınlar



öz-kavramlarını korumak için, daha çok kendini sabotaj eğilimine sahip olarak olumsuz değerlendirmeler karşısında daha dirençli olma ihtiyacı içinde olabilirler.

Bu çalışmada öz-saygı kendini sabotajı en çok (% 30) açıklayan olumsuz bir yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur. Yüksek öz-saygıya sahip olanların daha çok kendini sabotaj stratejilerini kullandığını gösteren çalışmaların (örn. Tice ve Baumeister, 1990) tersine bu çalışma, düşük öz-saygıya sahip olanların daha çok kendini sabotaj stratejilerini kullandığını gösteren araştırma bulgularıyla desteklenmektedir (örn. Feick ve Rhodewalt, 1997; Prapavessis ve Grove, 1998; Rhodewalt, 1990, Warner ve Moore, 2004). Bu iki değişken arasındaki ters ilişki en iyi kendini engelleyenlerin ve düşük öz-saygıya sahip olanların öz-saygılarını koruma motivasyonlarıyla açıklanabilir. Yüksek öz-saygıya sahip olanlar, öz-değerlerine gelen bir tehdit ile karşılaştıklarında olumlu niteliklerini alternatifli olarak kullanabilirler ancak düşük öz-saygıya sahip olanlar olumlu niteliklerinin az olduğunu düşündüklerinden, bu durumlarda daha kırılgan ve savunmacı olabilirler (Spencer ve ark.,1993). Düşük öz-saygıya sahip olanlar zaten düşük olan öz-saygılarını daha da düşürecek durumlardan nefret ederler (Baumeister, 1993). Öz-saygısı düşük olanlar başarısızlık durumlarında daha çok bedel öder ve daha çok acı çekerler, bu yüzden öncelikleri kendilerini başarısızlığın olumsuz sonuçlarına karşı korumaktır (Tice, 1993). Öz-koruma stratejilerini kullanma eğilimleri arttığından, sınırlı olan öz-kaynaklarının ve kırılganlıklarının üzerini örtecek dışsal sebepler bularak kendini sabotaja daha çok eğilimli olabilirler. Ayrıca öz-saygının kaygıyı tamponlama işlevi olduğu bilinmektedir (Greenberg ve ark., 1992). Algılanan bir tehdit olduğunda kaygı artar, öz-saygısı yüksek olanlar ise kaygıyla baş etmede daha başarılıdırlar. Öz-saygısı düşük olanlar ise kaygıyla yeterince baş edemedikleri için kendini sabotaj gibi öz-saygılarını koruyacak ya da onaracak stratejilere başvurabilirler. Düşük öz-saygıya sahip olanların kendini sabotaj eğilimlerinin daha çok

olması, kendi yetenek ve becerilerinden emin olmamaları ile de açıklanabilir. Karşılaştıkları zorlu durumlarla baş edemeyeceklerini ve performanslarını başarılı bir şekilde tamamlayamayacaklarını düşünen ve kendilerine daha az güvenen insanlar kendini sabotajın başarısızlığı dışsal nedenlere yükleme avantajına daha çok ihtiyaç duyarlar (Berglas ve Jones, 1978; Warner ve Moore, 2004). Öz-saygısı düşük olanlar kendilerine ilişkin daha az bilgiye sahiptirler, daha çok öz-kavram kargaşası yaşarlar, öz bilgileri daha tutarsız, belirsiz ve istikrarsızdır (Baumeister, 1993; Campbell ve Lavalley, 1993). Bu yüzden öz saygısı düşük olanlar, belirsiz yeteneklerle artan başarısızlıklarına açıklama bulmak için daha çok kendini sabotaja eğilimli olabilirler.

Çalışma bulguları, erteleme kendini sabotaj için pozitif bir yordacı olduğunu, öz-saygıdan sonra varyansın büyük bir kısmını (%22) açıkladığını göstermektedir. Bu bulgu, erteleme eğilimi ile birlikte kendini sabotajın da arttığını gösteren çalışma bulgularıyla paralellik göstermektedir (Beck ve ark., 2000; Ferrari, 1991; Ferrari ve Tice, 2000).

Ferrari ve Tice' ye (2000) göre erteleme kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanılabilir. Tamamlanması gereken bir işi erteleyerek yaratılan zaman kısıtı, başarı için engel teşkil ederken aynı zamanda başarısızlık için de hazır açıklama sağlayabilir. Ertelemeyi kendini sabotaj açısından inceleyen diğer çalışmalar da erteleme kendini sabotaj ile belirli bir raddeye kadar örtüştüğünü ortaya koymaktadır (Beck ve ark., 2000; Ferrari, 1991; Lay ve ark., 1992). Ancak kendini sabotaj pek çok farklı davranışsal engeli ve mazereti içerdiğinden ertelemeye göre daha geniş bir kavramdır. Bu ikili arasındaki olumlu ilişki her ikisinin paylaştığı sebep ve motivasyonlarla açıklanabilir. Öğrenciler, başarısızlıktan, kendilerinin ve başkalarının beklentilerini karşılayamamaktan korktukları ve kendilerine güvenmedikleri için erteleyebilirler (Brownlow ve Reasinger, 2000; Solomon ve Rothblum, 1984). Buna ek olarak erteleme nedenleri

arasında öz-saygılarına gelen tehditlerle baş etmek de yer almaktadır (Lay ve ark. 1992). İnsanlar yapılacak değerlendirmelerin öz-saygılarını düşüreceğini sezerlerse, daha çok kendini sabotaja eğilimli olurlar (Martin ve ark., 2003; Hirt ve ark., 1991). Ertelemenin arkasındaki bu nedenler öz-değerin korunması ve yüceltilmesi başlığı altında toplanabilir ki bunlar aynı zamanda kendini sabotajın de temel motivasyonlarını oluşturmaktadır. Benzer sebepleri ve aynı motivasyonları paylaşmaları, ertemele ve kendini sabotaj arasındaki olumlu ilişkiyi ve örtüşmeyi açıklayabilmektedir.

Sınav kaygısı da erteleme gibi olumlu bir yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur ancak, açıkladığı varyans (%6), ertelemeye göre daha azdır. Sınav kaygısı arttıkça, kendini sabotaj da artmaktadır. Bu bulgu, bu değişkenler arasında doğrusal ilişkiye işaret eden diğer araştırmalarla desteklenmektedir (Lay ve ark., 1992; Thomas ve Gadbois, 2007). Smith ve arkadaşları (1982) sınav kaygısının kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanımını test etmiştir. Öğrencilerin sınav kaygısının kabul edilebilir bir açıklama olduğunu düşündüklerinde, sınav kaygısının başarısızlıklarına alternatif bir açıklama sağlayan öz-koruma işlevini daha çok kullandıklarını bulmuşlardır. Bu bağlamda sınav kaygısı kendini sabotaj stratejisi olarak kullanılmaktadır ve başarının önündeki engel gerçekten yaratılmayıp iddia edildiği için de kendini sabotajın mazeret bulma çeşidine girmektedir. Öğrenci performansı kötü olduğunda bunun nedenini yeteneğinin, becerisinin veya zekasının düşüklüğü ile açıklamak yerine sınavda kaygılandığını iddia ederek açıklayabilir. Sınav kaygısına sahip olan öğrenciler, sınavda başarısız olma ihtimallerini, bunun olumsuz sonuçlarını düşünürler ve kendilerini başkalarıyla kıyaslarlar. (Sarason ve Sarason, 1990). İnsanlar, kendilerinin başarısız olacağını düşünürken diğer insanların onlardan başarı beklediklerini düşünürlerse, kendini sabotaj eğilimleri artar (Berglas ve Jones, 1978).

Ayrıca sınav kaygısına sahip olanlar değerlendirme durumlarında kendilerinden şüphe ederler ve iç çatışma yaşarlar (Sarason, 1984). Benzer bir biçimde yeterliliklerinden emin olmamak kendini sabotajın öncülleri arasında yer almaktadır (Harris ve Snyder, 1986; Warner ve Moore, 2004). Öz-kavramlarından emin olanlar, kendini sabotajın yüklemleme yararına daha çok az ihtiyaç duyarlar (Berglas ve Jones, 1978). Bunlara ek olarak sınav kaygısı olanlar daha fazla olumsuz ve akılcı olmayan düşünceye sahiptirler (Wong, 2008), ve bu düşünceler onların değerlendirilme kaygısını artırarak sınavı öz-kavramlarına karşı olan daha büyük bir tehdit gibi algılamalarına neden olabilir. Bu durum da onların kendini sabotaj eğilimlerini artırabilir.

Diğer değişkenlere oranla alanyazında daha az incelenen bir yordayıcı olarak öz-anlayış, bu çalışmada anlamlı, negatif bir yordayıcı olarak bulunmuştur ve kendini sabotajda küçük bir kısım (%2) varyansı açıklamıştır. Bu bulgu, öz-anlayışın negatif yordayıcı rolünü açığa çıkaran diğer araştırmalarla paralellik göstermektedir (Akın ve Akın, 2015; Petersen, 2014). Öz-anlayış arttıkça, kendini sabotaj azalmaktadır. Aralarındaki negatif ilişki her iki kavramın değerlendirmeye ve başarısızlık durumlarına yaklaşımı ile anlaşılabilir. Kendini sabotaj bakış açısına göre, kişiler becerilerini ya da zekalarını tanımlayabilecek görevlerle ya da sınavlarla karşılaştıklarında bunu öz-kavramlarına gelen bir tehdit olarak algırlar (Rhodewalt ve ark., 1991; Snyder ve Smith, 1982) kendilerini başkalarına sunma biçimleri hakkında endişelenir ve başkalarının onlar hakkında ne düşündüğüne önem verirler. (Kolditz ve Arkin, 1982; Rhodewalt ve ark., 1991). Kendilerini olumlu bir çerçevede görme ihtiyacı duyduklarından, öz-değerlerini artırmak ya da en azından korumak isterler (Blaine ve Crocker, 1993). Bu bağlamda, değerlendirme durumları onların öz-koruma ve öz-yüceltme motivasyonlarını tetikler. (Rhodewalt ve ark., 1991). Becerilerinin, yeteneklerinin ve zekalarının düşük olduğunu kabul etmek yerine, başarısızlıklarının nedenini

yükleyebilecekleri engeller yaratırlar ya da engellerin olduğunu iddia ederler (Berglas ve Jones, 1978).

Öz-anlayış bakış açısına göre, öz-değerlendirme başkalarının yaptığı değerlendirmelere ve ideal standartlara göre yapılmaz, öz değerlendirmede öze dair iyi ve kötü bütün özellikler kabul edilir, olası ve gerçek başarısızlıklar insanların kusursuz olamayacağı bilinciyle daha dengeli bir bakış açısıyla ele alınır. İnsanlar kendilerini daha yeterli görürler ve başarısızlıktan daha az korkarlar (Neff ve ark. 2005). Başka bir deyişle, öz-anlayışa sahip insanlar, kendilerini başkalarına nasıl sunacakları konusunda daha az endişeye, daha düşük değerlendirme kaygısına ve daha az öz-koruma ve öz-yüceltme ihtiyacına sahiptirler. Kendine hizmet eden yanlılığa gerek duymadıkları için öz-anlayışa sahip insanlar öze ilişkin doğru bilgilerle başetme konusunda daha başarılı olabilirler. Bu bağlamda kendini sabotaja daha az ihtiyaç duyabilirler.

### **Sonraki Çalışmalar İçin Öneriler**

Sonraki araştırmalar için yapılan öneriler aşağıda sunulmuştur:

- Sonuçların genellenebilirliğini arttırmak için, bu çalışma farklı üniversite öğrencileriyle seçkisiz örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak tekrarlanabilir.
- Bu çalışmada Kendini Sabotaj Ölçeği için yapılan doğrulayıcı faktör analizi, bu örneklem için kabul edilebilir model uyumu ile sonuçlanmış olsa da, Türk kültürüne daha uygun ve daha yüksek model uyumuna sahip geçerli ve güvenilir bir ölçek geliştirilebilir.
- Belirli davranış çeşitleri (çabalamamak, alkol kullanmak, ertelemek, vs.) ve mazeretler (sınav kaygısı bildirme, fiziksel belirtiler, vs.) alanyazında kendini engelleme stratejileri olarak sıklıkla araştırılmıştır. Ancak, öğrenciler bunların dışında da geniş bir kendini sabotaj repertuarına sahiptirler. Öğrenciler tarafından sıklıkla

kullanılan ancak alanyazında yer almayan kendini sabotaj yöntemlerini ortaya çıkarmak için tarama çalışmaları yapılabilir.

- Kendini sabotaj Türk alanyazında tamamlanmamış bir yapboz gibi kalmış ve yeterince araştırılmamıştır. Bu eksikliği gidermek için kendini sabotaj ile ilgili farklı eğitim seviyelerindeki öğrencilerle (ilkokul, ortaokul, lise, lisans ve yüksek lisans) deneysel çalışmalar ve alan çalışmaları yapılabilir.
- Cinsiyet, öz-saygı, erteleme, sınav kaygısı ve öz-anlayış değişkenlerinin kendini sabotaj üzerindeki yordayıcı rolü nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılarak ölçülmüştür. Ancak, nitel araştırma yöntemleri kendini sabotaj ve ilişkili değişkenler hakkında daha kapsamlı bilgi sağlayabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın nicel yöntemler kullanılarak geliştirilmesi önerilmektedir.
- Cinsiyet farkının davranışsal kendini sabotaj üzerindeki etkisi hakkında çok sayıda deneysel çalışma olmasına rağmen, kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotaj üzerindeki etkisi detaylandırılmamıştır. Bu sebeple, kişilik özelliği olarak kendini sabotajdaki cinsiyet farkını daha detaylı olarak irdelleyen araştırmalar yapılabilir.
- Bu çalışmanın yordayıcıları kendini sabotajı yüzde elliden fazla (% 61) varyans ile açıklamıştır. Ancak, hala açıklanmamış bir kısım varyans bulunmaktadır. Kendini sabotajı açıklayabilecek farklı yordayıcıları içeren çalışmalar yapılabilir.

## APPENDIX E: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### **ENSTİTÜ**

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

### **YAZARIN**

Soyadı : BARUTÇU YILDIRIM  
Adı : FUNDA  
Bölümü : EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : SELF-HANDICAPPING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF GENDER, SELF-ESTEEM, PROCRASTINATION, TEST ANXIETY, AND SELF-COMPASSION

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☒

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☒

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**